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ABSTRACT

This report describes a program which grew out of a study that explored writing and literacy skills in Anglo, Black, and Hispanic high school students in North Philadelphia. Section One describes writing in the lives of adolescents as viewed within the home, community, noninstitutional, and broader sociopolitical settings. Particular emphasis is given to ethnographic data collected and used to identify and describe sociocultural factors affecting students' writing both in the community and in the school. Themes related to literacy, such as bilingualism, bidialectalism, informal language, and the role of writing in the workplace, are also discussed. Section Two focuses on writing in the classroom as it is viewed by educators. Educational strategies that were developed and employed to teach functional writing to urban students are detailed. The introduction of music to the writing curriculum is described as one of the major strategies implemented. Other ways that ethnographers can share their complementary approaches to develop and enhance students' literacy skills are stressed. The report's conclusion focuses on the integration of school and social relationships in the successful development of writing and all learning skills. The text is followed by an extensive bibliography; several case studies of Anglo, Black, and Hispanic learners/writers; and samples of writing from community and school contexts. (CJM)

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"A WRITING OF OUR OWN"

IMPROVING THE FUNCTIONAL WRITING OF URBAN SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS

Final Report
December 30, 1983

Submitted to:

The National Institute of Education

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"A WRITING OF OUR OWN:"

IMPROVING THE FUNCTIONAL WRITING OF URBAN SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS

Final Report

Page

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS i

INTRODUCTION 1

SECTION I

I Project Narrative 11

II Adolescent Learner/Writers and Their Writing 20

III The Educational Environment and the School 30

IV The Role of Writing in the Workplace 37

V "Rap" -- the Ethnographic Analysis of a Folk Genre as Related to Literacy 45

VI Bilingualism and Bidialectalism: Social Constraints on Language Use 58

VII Formats -- a Tacit Dimension of Writing and Learning 66

SECTION II

I Entering the Classroom 73

II Practitioner/Research Collaboration 78

III From Community Ethnography to Educational Strategy 80

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS 98

BIBLIOGRAPHY 107

Appendix I: Case Studies

Impressions of Anglo Learner/Writers

Impressions of Black Learner/Writers

Impressions of Hispanic Learner/Writers

Appendix II: Written Artifacts from Community

Appendix III: Written Artifacts from School Implmentation

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All conclusions and possible errors included in this report are the responsibility of the principal authors: Richard W. Morris and Conan N. Louis. Mr. Louis was not involved in the preparation of the final draft, although he was essential to the preparation of this report. Any mistakes or misrepresentations are, therefore, primarily my own responsibility.

Richard W. Morris, Ph.D.
December 30, 1983

INTRODUCTION

This research began as a study of writing compared ethnographically across school and nonschool settings. For fifteen months we have observed the writing activities of Anglo, Black and Hispanic adolescents in a large urban field site of North Philadelphia. We have examined the process and products of literacy events in both formal and informal settings. We have concluded, not simply that these young people write regularly or with remarkable ability, but that they write with greater frequency and craft than we were led to expect by current research findings on the literacy levels of adolescents (most of which has been generated by in-school investigation). Outside the classroom, many of the adolescents in our research were found to have a recurrent need and desire to write in order to express themselves or to manage the affairs of their daily lives. In the process of employing writing to meet their everyday goals, they often demonstrated at will, in their own community many of the skills which they were required to possess in the classroom. Yet, because of various snags in the fabric of social life, which exist at a cultural as well as a linguistic level, these adolescents either did not perform well in school or were not always judged to possess many of the skills and competencies related to literacy.

Literacy and the underlying competencies which prepare a person to acquire literacy are not immediately visible when one looks for them outside the classroom. This is so because they are interwoven with other activities which are not, on the surface, literacy-related. The avid baseball fan will often describe himself as a non-reader, even though he regularly reads sports columns in magazines and newspapers, because that reading is recreational. The bilingual boy who helps in the kitchen by translating recipes for his monolingual mother will often overlook the reading, writing and expanded vocabulary that result from his translations because he is, above all, hungry. The structuring of information in giving directions or in arguing about a difference of opinion are not judged to be useful to writing, because the end product is not written.

The teachers and young people in our research regularly assumed that "writing is as writing does." One is not a writer unless he produces a written text and it must be a text which meets the social expectations, cultural norms and linguistic rules of particular groups. As Szwed (1982) has noted, there is a plurality of literacies which causes these expectations, norms and rules to vary significantly across group boundaries. Those who fail to acknowledge this viewpoint, are likely to ignore "non-standard" types of literacy and the hidden competencies which are the basis for the acquisition of standard literacy skills.

In order to understand the social supports and cultural norms which accompany literacy, we have spent a great deal of our time looking at everything which is contextual to writing. We have sought to recognize and describe the multiplicity of competencies which allow learners to solve problems at various levels with language, competencies which are the basis of literacy. The findings of this approach have allowed us to design and implement a plan of instructional activities in the classroom which has successfully involved students in writing, allowed them to employ their background experiences and their various competencies in the production and improvement of their own writing, and transformed the role of teacher (in at least one classroom) from that of classroom authority and assessor of writing (Healy, 1982) to one of educational facilitator and learning resource.

The central focus of our investigation and instructional approach might best be described as "discourse" (Shuy, 1982). It is at the level of discourse that the purpose for writing is strongly tied to the writing process and product. We saw in our research that these young people often initiated writing with a particular need or purpose in mind, such as to express their feelings in poetry, to record the daily sales in their father's business, or to list and memorize important information. In being aware of a purpose for their writing, they were well on their way to understanding the constraints of written discourse, for the form of their writing often developed out of their expressed purpose. To a certain extent, writing skills were seen to be a means of meeting particular ends. Purposeful writers, then, were seen to be methodical writers and in adapting methods for accomplishing specific goals, they were quite willing to consider (if not master) the minute details of spelling, grammar, syntax, etc. As purposeful writers they were likely to draw on the vast wealth of experience they possessed as language users and members of a speech community, with its various communicative strategies and speech genres. Whether they wrote love letters, poems, record reviews, or grocery lists they demonstrated a sensitivity to the constraints that a particular kind of written discourse places on their communication. They also employed particular cognitive and social skills in the accomplishment of specific goals which are applicable to many types of writing.

It is also at the level of discourse that the lack of purpose for writing is most obvious and the problems presented by writing are most prominent. When we and our respondents examined what we were doing with writing, and by what means, we were forced to admit that writing poses many cognitive, communicative, and practical complications. Most people think faster than they write and they must edit, compress, or interrupt what they are doing in uncomfortable ways to get words down on a page. In most goal-oriented activities (unless writing itself is the activity), writing delays the accomplishment of practical activities. Often people can accomplish their immediate goals without writing, but they are obliged to document the activities in writing for their parents, teachers, or supervisors. Our young respondents were the first to point out that writing is not always the best way to get things done. Though this is true, they regularly overlooked the functions that writing does serve; and they could not anticipate the many uses that writing would have in their futures.

Social situations may be structured so that the purpose of writing is diminished or overshadowed and reasons for *not* writing are powerful. Increasingly more kinds of work, for example, are structured to eliminate the need for writing. This is particularly true in the institutions where our young, predominantly poor and minority respondents are likely to find employment. Classrooms for some students are settings where the sanctions against written mistakes are so painful that avoidance of writing became a reasonable alternative to writing. Accompanying these institutional sanctions against writing was an ideology about the limited usefulness of writing, which caused some of our respondents to make comments such as "I don't need to write; I'm going into the Army." Because not all writing was internally motivated or supported by purpose, we have been obliged to consider the social factors which work against writing, or against perfecting writing, and to describe them in a systematic fashion.

This report is organized into two sections. SECTION ONE contains a thorough documentation of the research, with particular emphasis on [illegible] ethnographic data as they were used to identify and describe sociocultu[illegible] factors affecting writing in both the community and the school. A "Project Narrative" is provided which documents the methods and progress of the research. Ethnographic techniques employed in the research are described here. This chapter should allow the reader to situate the findings to be discussed in subsequent chapters within their sequential context. The chapter entitled "Adolescent Learner/Writers and Their Writing" presents the results of our community ethnography and describes the sociocultural constraints on writing in nonschool settings. In "The Educational Environment and the School," we provide a portrait of the school where our research and implementation were conducted. In the course of this ethnographic work, certain events brought particular themes to our attention which were clearly related to writing and pedagogy. These themes are treated in the chapters entitled "Bilingualism and Bidialectalism: Social Constraints on Language Use", "'Rap'--the Ethnographic Analysis of a Folk Genre as Related to Literacy", "The Role of Writing in the Workplace and Formats--a Tacit Dimension of Writing and Learning to Write." These themes are pertinent to the study of literacy in nonschool settings, and each deserved separate attention. In these sections, the educational implications of our ethnographic findings are discussed.

SECTION TWO focuses on the educational strategies employed and details the process through which they were developed. The gathering of ethnographic data in the school and the early phases of our involvement are described in the chapter entitled "Entering the Classroom." A variety of possible kinds of involvement and roles for ethnographers are considered as they are related to school settings. The interdependence and complimentarity of ethnographers and teachers working together in the school are discussed in the chapter titled "Practitioner/Researcher Collaboration." Techniques for achieving effective collaboration are also provided. The process whereby ethnographic findings can be fashioned into instructional strategies and the substance of our own approach are outlined in detail in the chapter entitled "From Community Ethnography to Educational Strategy." A rationale for the implementation is also offered. Throughout this section, issues related to the collaborative relations established with practitioners are explained. Successes and failures encountered in the course of the implementation of our findings are explained as they arose in the context of our intervention. It is intended that all of the procedures and findings offered in SECTION TWO will be useful to school practitioners.

Certain explanation is necessary if the complimentarity between ethnography and classroom instruction is to be most understandable. As is customary with ethnographic documentation, we have described the same behaviors and events from several viewpoints or with different sets of concerns. The ideal result of portraying the same object from different angles will be a composite picture which gives a sense of the object as a whole. A simple example of this approach is demonstrated in the choice of dividing this report into two sections. SECTION ONE describes writing in the lives of adolescents as viewed within the home, community, noninstitutional and broader sociopolitical settings. SECTION TWO, in contrast, focuses on writing in the classroom as it is viewed by educators. Because the writers observed were the same and sociocultural influences on their writing were interrelated, whether they were in school or the community, these contrasting descriptions are complimentary.

This multiple imaging can also be seen in each of the chapters of SECTION ONE dealing with the ethnographic description of writing in community and school settings. "Chapter I: Project Narrative" may be regarded as a discussion of our methods which explains the logistics of implementing the research. Our methods of contacting and establishing rapport with respondents and our strategies for gathering and interpreting data are discussed here. "Chapter II: Adolescent Learner/Writers and their Writing" goes slightly beyond the chronological account of the first chapter. In Chapter II, we present the analysis of case studies of adolescents in order to explain how these ethnographic relationships developed and lead to the identification of significant questions or themes about literacy in nonschool settings. These themes and the behaviors which they describe were strongly influenced by a particlar sociopolitical setting which is described in "Chapter III: The Educational Environment and the School." Having documented the setting and the course of our research in the first three chapters, this report proceeds to focus on particular ethnographic findings in the remainder of SECTION ONE.

"Chapter IV: The Role of Writing in the Workplace" provides a case study of writing as it was used and regarded in a business establishment where our respondents typically found employment. The ethnographic data reveal that writing is not always used in the daily work routine of our respondents. When writing is used at work, it rarely has any singular importance separate from other activities. Good employees, for example, are valued for their ability with machines, their personal appearance, or their general social skills more often than they are prized for their writing ability. The data suggest that adolescents in our research must be very optimistic and mindful of the future if they are to recognize a need for writing in their lives.

"Chapter V: Rapping -- The Ethnographic Analysis of a Folk Genre as Related to Literacy" describes a writing activity which was found to be very popular among many of our adolescent respondents during the research period. Many spent a great deal of their time outside of school composing, rehearsing and performing this lyric poetry which they called "rap." Not only did they commit their rap lyrics to paper, but the composition process generally occurred in groups, where peers assisted one another in word selection, theme development, and the evaluation of their performances. Oncemore, many educators and parents failed to acknowledge the inherent value in rap composition as a literacy event. Thus, the substantial skills and motivation which these adolescents applied to writing rap lyrics was not incorporated into classroom instruction. All of these factors argued for a careful analysis of rap as it occurred in nonschool settings and for the inclusion of findings from this analysis into our instructional intervention. Due to the complexity of rap composition and its potential value for pedagogy it is given considerable and recurring attention throughout this report.

"Chapter VI: Bilingualism and Bidialectalism -- Social Constraints on Language Use" focuses on the social dynamics of the classroom as they are influenced by language proficiency and preference. The outcome of a situation is described where the official activities of education in the classroom are to be conducted in Standard English while the students of that classroom vary greatly in their language abilities. This situation of notable linguistic and dialectal variation is shown to influence all students in the classroom, but particularly those Puerto Rican students who are native Spanish speakers. Ethnographic data suggest that in establishing a social role for themselves, these Puerto Rican students must attempt to adjust to the dialects of their peers as well as the linguistic demands of the teacher. The linguistic complexity of theses multiethnic classrooms is shown to affect the way Puerto Rican students present themselves to others and how they are regarded by their peers as well as their teachers. It is suggested that this situation will have a significant impact on classroom performance in general and on the acquisition of writing skills in particular.

Sociocultural rules apply to every written document produced, whether it be by an individual for informal purposes or a group for highly formalized reasons. Oncemore, writers must have an understanding of the rules which govern a particular type of writing before they can generate appropriate content for a given document. This research has demonstrated that form and function are interdependent in successful writing. The job-seeker may have a well defined function which he hopes his letter of inquiry will accomplish: to gain employment. If his letter is not written in the proper form of a business letter, he is unlikely to achieve his goal. Another writer may be facile with images and metaphor, but because he chooses rap music to express his creative ability, he may not please the teacher who regards rap as a trite or vulgar form of expression. "Chapter VII: Formats — a Tacit Dimension of Writing and Learning to Write" deals with these issues by providing ethnographic evidence which suggests that many of our respondents had a clear purpose and function for their writing but were not apprised of the accepted sociocultural conventions which would have insured their effective communication. The concept of formats is proposed for discussing those conventions which determine comprehension of and response to written documents prior to their lexical or syntactic content.

In SECTION TWO we have diverged from the format for presentation of research findings as stated in the "Request for Proposals (NIE-R-81-0004)" in one minor, but significant detail. That document requests that the results of both the ethnographic study of the community and the educational implementation be presented in a section separate from "techniques" recommended for use by educators. To do so would create an illusion of independence of the recommendations from the process through which they were derived. This research did not produce "techniques," in the sense of discrete behavioral units which can be employed in varying contexts. We make no claim that the incorporation of music into class curriculum, as we have done in our own intervention, for example, will produce similar results in other settings. We do suggest that music was an effective foundation upon which to build an educational approach because it allowed students to draw on additional competencies in their writing and facilitated a renegotiation of various relations in the classroom which had presented obstacles to learning and writing in the past. The outcome of our research, then, is to offer educators methods for investigating and deriving alternate interpretations of literacy-related behavior and establishing social relationships which are most conducive to writing.

SECTION ONE

I. Project Narrative

Prior to the start of this project on July 27, 1981, the ethnographers assigned to do field work in the community assembled a list of 118 students who attend Wordsworth School (a pseudonym) and resided in the field site. All were notified about the research by letter and approximately 80 of these students were contacted by telephone. Sixty-two students were ultimately interviewed about the research. Some of these students were already respondents in an ongoing study of teenage life-styles and drug use, but we found it necessary to start anew with all respondents adequately, in order to investigate nonschool writing behavior. (Respondents communicated different details about themselves, depending on the sorts of questions they were asked.)

The essential goals of these interviews were:

(1) To secure the cooperation and understanding of respondents. (This involved discussing our proposed project and methods with them -- a consistently fruitful and revealing enterprise.)

(2) To begin to investigate the history of the respondent and his/her family, while exploring possible social correlates of writing in that context.

For each interview, the ethnographer produced a brief synopsis. (See Appendix I.) After omitting any markers whereby respondents could be identified, the synopses were distributed to participants in staff seminars. The discussions which resulted lead to numerous research questions and techniques which guided our in-depth case studies of fifteen respondents.

Our original proposal called for monthly joint staff seminars involving the staff of our project and that of the Ethnography of Literacy Project at the University of Pennsylvania. However, we found these meetings to be so useful in the sharing of information that we began meeting on a weekly basis. These working sessions were invaluable as a forum for discussing, in detail, the knowledge gained and problems encountered in the ethnographic field work. Further, these sessions enabled us to expand the set of questions brought to the interviews, and to develop a uniformity among our case studies.

The School District of Philadelphia was scheduled to begin classes for the 1981-82 school year on September 8. School remained closed, however, for seven weeks after the originally scheduled opening date, due to a strike by the 22,000 member Philadelphia Federation of Teachers. At issue was a $223 million deficit, which the school district intended to defray, in part, through the abrogation of a contract signed the previous year. This contract would have provided a ten percent pay increase for teachers and prevented the district from laying off 3500 union members. On October 30, the schools were opened by a court decree, but no conclusions were reached and no long-term solutions had been found. Negotiations continued, but this time with Philadelphia's 213,000 public school children attending classes.

Since school was closed for all of September and October, we were unable to begin observation in the classroom or to establish collaborative relationships with teachers. However, we were able to focus our attention on the ethnography in the community, and were rewarded with the strong relationships established between ourselves and our respondents.

This initial delay ultimately had a positive effect on our research. Though school was closed for all of September and October, and we were unable to begin observation in the classroom or to establish collaborative relationships with teachers, we were able to focus our attention on the ethnography of the community, and were rewarded with the strong relationships established between respondents and staff.

One of the difficulties imposed by the strike was that we were unable to contact the Wordsworth students on our list whose addresses or phone numbers had changed over summer recess. This amounted to roughly forty students of our original 118. We found, however, that contacting, interviewing, and establishing the rapport needed for successful ethnographic research was more time-consuming than we had anticipated. By working with a reduced list of potential respondents, we were able to invest the necessary time in interviewing, and in participant observation after the initial interview, in those cases where respondents seemed interested an appropriate for inclusion in our research. We also avoided loss of interest and the prolonged anticipation and disappointment among those we did not choose to interview further.

Though our investigation was restricted in its early stages, primarily to the community, we gradually focused most of our efforts on Wordsworth School -- a separate and equally complex domain. In the community research we were able to collect a variety of written artifacts and began to see that writing plays a vital role in the personal and social lives of our respondents. Community settings provided particular constraints and motivations for writing and had a shaping influence on the written product. As we began to document the social constraints and supports for writing in the community, and to determine its various generic forms, we imagined that the various writing events found in the community might be transplanted whole into the classroom.

Our first experiences in the school demonstrated that merely transplanting literacy-related activities from the community into the school was not feasible. The classroom was separate and sufficiently dissimilar to merit description in its own right. The boundaries between the community and the school as distinct social domains required close scrutiny. Once more, we discovered quite soon that developing entree into the school demanded that we establish new relationships with school personnel and a role for ourselves as researchers. Finally, our move into the school required that we rethink our plans for the creation of instructional activities. Over this later period, we began to our task as one of translation and distillation. To incorporate nonschool writing activities into the classroom we had to isolate the significant elements of both content and context so that writing activities in the classroom could be conducted appropriately, i.e., maintaining the purposes and enthusiam with which they were originally conducted in the community.

The forms and accompanying fuctions of writing in the North Philadelphia community were extremely varied. We collected samples of all of the following types of non-directed writing:

- a boy's log entries as he followed the growth and development of the plants in his bedroom;
- a girls' expressions of her feelings and values in poetry;
- the journal of a boy which he used to resolve his feelings of confusion and anger about particular family interactions;
- the diary of a girl, discarded because she now had a close friend to confide in;
- reems of one and two page summaries of encyclopedia articles written "for fun" during summer vacation by the president of a junior high school class;
- the daily sales records of a boy who helped his father sell wares at a local flea market;
- the by-laws for membership and voting created by the members of a sports club;
- logos of superheroes and accompanying descriptions of their extraordinary abilities produced by a self-described "comic book freak";
- translations of recipes and grocery lists produced by a Hispanic boy for his mother; and
- the songs written by a girl who claimed that reading and writing were the only means of gaining privacy in her small, over-crowded rowhouse.

Although the creators of these written artifacts were self-motivated and nondirected in their efforts to produce these particular items, they often took inspiration and forms from various institutional sources, e.g., teachers, parents, the media, official documents.

It became clear from the collection of these written artifacts and the description of the contexts which influenced their creation that adolescents wrote for a great number of reasons:

- to gain or express approval and disapproval;
- as a form of play and fantasy;
- to describe and objectify their experience;
- to compete;
- to accomplish the necessary record-keeping and contractual aspects of business;
- to negotiate interpersonal relationships;
- to practice and perfect their oral presentations of self; and
- as a form of gratification achieved through writing itself.

This list is surely incomplete (as are most such functional itemizations), but it demonstrates that the purposes and functions of writing are numerous. It becomes important, then, to ask why some people fail to write, and much of this research may be understood as an attempt to answer that question.

We discovered that adolescents use language purposefully and, furthermore, that they showed a familiarity with many of the literacy devices commonly taught in the classroom. They utilized these devices in much of their nonschool writing. We collected artifacts of writing in all narrative forms. We also found examples of analogy, alliteration, metaphor, onomatopoeia, and paralellism in the non-directed writing of our respondents. This was the case among speakers of both standard and non-standard English. Our respondents varied tremendously in the degree to which they had mastered these forms. These writers seemed to be equally as likely to have acquired these skills from alternative sources, such as popular music, as from classroom instruction.

In addition to the work and school activities which occupied the time of our respondents, entertainment played a central role in their lives. Fashion, sports and music were important forms of entertainment and all had related literacy activities. Many girls in our sample, and increasingly more boys read fashion magazines. Almost all of our respondents regularly took in sports events and written information about sports from numerous sources. Many of our respondents wrote musical lyrics and expressed the wish to become performers. Television held a position of prominence in most households, and our respondents regularly read magazines documenting the lives of current soap opera stars. Forms of entertainment such as these may very well provide adolescents with their principal examples of language in use, written and spoken. These youths certainly were out of school for more waking hours than they were in school. These forms of entertainment occupied the greater part of their free-time conversation and observation time. It seemed apparent, therefore, that these entertainment activities and their related literacy events might be tapped as a source of instructional activities in the classroom.

We met no parents who did not claim to value writing, however, we noticed that the parents of our respondents were differentially involved in the education of and scheduling of literacy activites for their children. During the Philadelphia teachers' strike, we saw that some parents avoided any break in the continuity of the education of their children by assigning and reviewing homework daily. In addition to establishing substitute schooling in the home, these and other parents took pains to limit the recreational and television time of their children so as to allow time for literacy activities. Some parents, who were themselves avid readers, sought to inculcate desireable values in their children through the books they passed on to them. Other parents seemed very uninvolved in activities in the home. In some cases this behavior was accompanied by a trust in the child's ability to motivate him/herself under which the child could possibly flourish. In other cases, this option seemed to be accompanied by expressions of helplessness among parents regarding their ability to have constructive input. Many monolingual Hispanic parents expressed frustration over their inability to involve themselves in their children's education -- at home or at school. Their inability to speak English created insurmountable barriers to involvement in their children's education.

On December 8 and 9, 1982, we gave presentations about the research to the faculty of the two school campuses targeted for the research (Alpha, because of its explicit emphasis on writing and Delta, because a significant number of residents of the field site attended that unit).

In both instances, the project was well received by the faculty, although some concern was expressed by one teacher at Alpha about being "used so that graduate students could write a Ph.D. dissertation." (This concern was addressed by indicating that the research was being conducted at the request of NIE.) Two teachers from each campus volunteered to work on the project, and arrangements were made to visit four classrooms the following week.

Not surprisingly, we discovered through our research in the school that this social domain generates its own constraints and expectations which shape the behavior of teachers and their interaction with students. Following each class, we found it helpful to spend a few minutes discussing the day's class with teachers, so as to understand these issues. Out of these discussions a collaborative relationship developed. Teachers began to feel free to ask questions regarding the day's lesson and to volunteer their feelings about how assignments were received by students. On one occasion, when a student complained about the repetitive nature of homework activities, the teacher enlisted the aid of the researcher in convincing the student of the merits of the assignment. Although not entirely convinced, the student finally acquiesced to the teacher's wishes. This particular student eventually developed a significant relationship with the researcher. She wrote poetry which she shared with the researcher on a weekly basis. The teacher, therefore, hoped that the researcher might have some special influence with this student. Although this was only one case, we felt that it exemplified the type of relationship we could seek to establish with other strudents and teachers.

As our involvement in the school progressed, interviews with teachers revealed what they expect in regard to the quality and nature of their students' speaking and writing: grammatically correct sentences and cogent paragraphs. They fostered the belief among themselves, for example, that students tend to speak in brief utterances and incomplete sentences. They regarded the expressive styles of students as problematic and attempted in their daily instruction to encourage students to elaborate more in their written and spoken expression. This information raised a number of questions, all related to the notion of productive competence in language use.

(1) By focusing on the production of correct sentences and well-structured paragraphs are teachers segmentalizing the expressive process to an unnecessary degree and thereby interrupting the acquisition of productive competence?

(2) By focusing solely on the sentence and paragraph and, furthermore, by considering these expressive units only as they are used to handle particular tasks and subject matter, are teachers failing to lend legitimacy to expressive forms which are relevant to adolescents?

(3) What are the consequences of an instructional procedure where more critical emphasis is placed on form than on the content of the expression?

(4) Is the teachers' emphasis on elaboration in opposition to community standards of language use, which might value succinctness of style over elaboration and detail?

After several months of participant observation in the classroom we developed and implemented a plan for the improvement of instructional activities in the classroom. The remainder of the research period was devoted to the implementation and evaluation of that plan. Our goal in this effort was to utilize the knowledge gained from out ethnography of writing in the community to inform classroom instruction. Since we saw music as an important factor in the daily lines of our respondents and members of their social networks, the first phase of implementation focused upon writing activities related to music. The activity of central importance -- "rapping" -- fully involved both Black and Hispanic teenagers. And, while members of the white community were less involved (none of our white respondents considered themselves "rappers" or produced rap lyrics), they were equally aware of the popularity and commercial success of the genre, and maintained very definite opinions aobut it. Ultimately, we were able to involve all students in opinionated and enthusiastic discussion of the notion of cultural preference. This discussion aided students in identifying descrpitive terminology, which they subsequently used in classroom activities designed to elicit their written opinion about music.

This initial phase of our implementation made a recursive approach to the research possible. Through observation and description of the phenomenon of rapping, for example, we identified collaboration among peers as a significant component of the creative process. After sharing this information with teachers, we noted an increased willingness on their part to encourage peer collaboration and feedback. Additionally, students requested more freedom in the choice of topics for classroom discussion and writing activites. As we sought to incorporate the concerns of both teachers and students into our implementation, our approach underwent three significant changes:

- a shift away from an exclusive concern with topical activities and written texts, to a concern with the contextual and interactional variables which shape writing in the classroom.
- a shift away from a prescriptive approach with teachers toward cooperative problem-solving in a manner which fully incorporates the perceptions, skills and identified concerns of teachers.
- a shift away from direct classroom involvement by research staff toward training teacher to enabledthem to solve problema ethnographically.

In a manner which was unanticipated, we saw a method of evaluating our implementation grow naturally out of the research. This approach to evaluation emphasized a processual and recursive approach and was congruent with Hymes' (1982) portrayal of ethnography as "dialectical, reliant on regular feedback, and interactive-adaptive." This evaluation diverged from pre-post approaches to evaluation; it avoided any classroom intervention which viewed the classroom as a "black box" into which particular stimuli are fed and from which a finite set of responses are produced, observed and measured. In fact, perhaps the most remarkable results of our implementation were unanticipated and without an interactive-adaptive approach would have been thoroughly overlooked.

II. Adolescent Learner/Writers and Their Writing*

Initial effort in the research involved community ethnography in which we contacted Wordsworth students who were willing to talk with us about writing and collected artifacts of written communication which had been generated outside the classroom. Talking with these adolescents about writing, education and their daily lives was fairly easy, regardless of whether they viewed themselves as poor, average or excellent students. Perhaps this was because they were asked to talk only about themselves and their experiences (nothing they did not alreay know). In these initial interviews (see Appendix I) we asked about the daily activities of our respondents; the topics of writing and education were considered secondarily. From these preliminary interviews we formed impressions and research questions (now appropriately phrased) which guided the remainder of our research. We also formed lasting relations with a few respondents who provided us with input for our research throughout the remainder of the project. We came to know some of our respondents much better than others, but all provided insights about the functions and meaning of writing in their lives. Not surprisingly the variation in the relationships we established with these young people focused our attention on the ideological and sociocultural constraints on literacy.

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*Case studies referred to in this section are included in Appendix I.

The collection of written artifacts was not a difficult task in itself. Most every household or respondent we visited had some form of self-motivated writing, whether it was a grocery list, a scribbled note, a personal letter, or an original essay. The difficulty was to postpone judgement about the worth of these artifacts. It was easy to discard a grocery list for example, and ignore the context of its production where several members might have participated in remembering and spelling necessary items to purchase. We were regularly tempted also to move on after an initial interview with someone who did not become talkative in response to our questions or reflect on their learning and writing abilities. Explaining the biases we had towards certain types of people and written artifacts was one of the most essential and telling aspects of the ethnographic fieldwork. As we began to look at the context in which many of these written artifacts were produced, the multiple competencies and background knowledge employed in their development and display augmented our understanding of literacy.

The case studies we developed were uneven in content and the depth of understanding achieved about each respondent. It was simply easier to gain access to some respondents and to direct our interviews and observations towards issues of writing and learning. At first, many respondents missed appointments which had been agreed upon. Other times, the involvement of parents presented an obstacle to our coming to know their child. We were also obliged to consider many ethical issues affecting interaction with our respondents: what was appropriate behavior when they were home alone after school, when parents wanted us to intervene in the discipline of their children regarding education, when we were placed in the role of confidant by one member of a family or another, what role should we take? Not only did these issues shape the nature of our relations with our respondents, but they also revealed important information about people's ideology of literacy. Their expectations about our jobs as ethnographers and what we wanted to discover about their lives determined the manner in which they presented themselves in our home visits, the types of information they offered and the ways they interpreted our questions.

Many interviews -- particularly first interviews and those including parents -- were assumed by our respondents to be about formal education and schooling. They were dominated by a concern with the problems and successes of education. Respondents regularly spent much of their time talking about all the reasons that they have done poorly in school or felt disappointed with their educations. They had alot go get off their chests," as one respondent put it when we began an interview about the education of his children. Even where interviews were directed by respondents towards the educational successes in their lives and all the good learning habits that they practice, we regarded this as potentially misleading, for it directed us away from the way people naturally structured learning and writing events for themselves. Our constant insistence that we were not associated with the school and did not arrive at their home as evaluators had little effect in directing respondents away from problems and success of found education. Their enthusiam and concern demonstrated the importance that they gave to education. All at least spoke as if education was an essential part of successful living.

Implicit in this issue was a characteristic among many of our respondents that they did not readily distinguish between learning and schooling. In our interviews, respondents directed conversation towards concerns about success and failure (issues related to schooling) and away from issues concerning learning. Learning, we felt, was an inevitable part of daily life. What people learned was a matter of social roles and support. What they were given credit for learning and knowing was a matter of institutional legitimation (that which takes place in schooling). So, our respondents were more likey to produce report cards and prize-winning essays than to explain how they learned to fish or write a love letter.

The implications of not distinguishing between learning and schooling had direct impact on individuals and families. Family members rewarded one another not for what they knew and could demonstrate in the household but for what they demonstrated in the classroom and brought home as proof. Children in many of our families were rewarded for grades but not for carrying on a good conversation over the dinner table. Paula's mother (see case studies) is a good example of one who equated school performance with learning. She regularly rewarded her daughter for A's on her report card, but for little else. A second point is that family members often structured the learning environment in the home exactly as they believed educational institutions would. They assumed that if they attended school meeings, monitored the grades and school conduct of their offspring, and taught skills for using standard school texts, they had performed everything necessary in providing for the education of their children. These activities took the place of conversation and verbal interaction in the household and often they seemed to replace other sorts of interaction and activity altogether. Some families seemed to be so frozen in conflict over schooling that they did not seek to develop cognitive skills and healthy interaction among family members -- but to achieve good grades.

Not all families shared this characteristic. On the contrary, some households appeared to be ablaze with activity and involvement additional to that concerning schooling. Walter's household, for example, resembled a variety show for all the different activities ongoing there. Each visit revealed a family member engaged in some different task. These tasks ranged from home repair to reading and were just as likely to be solitary as group activities. Accompanying this high level of activity was a great warmth and openness toward the ethnographer in all his visits to the household. Something about this family seemed to foster self-motivated learning (which often involved reading and writing). The types of subjects Walter set out to learn were not always school-related or clearly complimentary to his school subjects, but in many cases they were directly linked to the sorts of skills he was asked to develop in the classroom. Perhaps the most important feature of Walter's learning activities outside the classroom was a strong component of self-initiation and follow-though. The science books that Walter read were ones that he selected for himself. The comic books he read so voraciously and the contests he enetered were equally his. It was clear also that in the course of pursuing and developing these interests he developed many generalizable skills. It was not clear, due mostly to the time limits of our research, how these prepared him for school performance which would be favorably evaluated by teachers.

Not all of the adolescent respondents in our research were learning because of the supports and stimulus provided by their household environments. Some seemed motivated towards reading and writing in spite of the distractions and conflicts in that environment. One young girl had taught herself to read music and she (like her mother), was an avid reader of novels and magazines. She claimed that reading was the only way to gain privacy in the small rowhouse where she lived and shared space with her eight siblings. If she received support or role modeling from her family, it was from only one person, her mother. Other members of the family were more interested in watching television and entertaining visitors.

Some might offer a strictly psychological interpretation for such phenomena, saying that certain individuals are endowed with the capacities for learning which will be developed in spite of family influences. There is, however, an equally valid cultural explanation related to the symbolic themes around which family members interact. Family members seemed to be regularly concerned with certain issues among themselves. All literacy activities were the vehicle through which these themes were played out. These themes include the following:

> Public/private themes: Many of the adolescents we observed in the household used reading to create private space for

themselves. Their reading and diary entries would cease, however, when other family members showed too much interest in those activities. Even with the writng of song lyrics, which ultimately were to be performed publicly, writers needed private time for composition and refinement of their skills; and they were discouraged in their creative endeavors when their lyrics were made public at the wrong point in their development.

Themes of dependence and independence: Literacy and educational issues, such as school grades and conduct, seemed to be the substance of negotiations between family members regarding control and self-determination. When parents were strongly directive about learning and education in their relations to their children, literacy activities ceased or were diminished. Our respondents seemed most willing to read and write when they had chosen to do so. They also seemed willing to practice all sorts of school-fostered and self-initiated writing when these activities were balanced by other involvements, such as time for music, sports, or simply hanging around with their friends. Parents seemed most successful at encouraging writing in the home, when they showed a general and consistent interest in writing, but did not dictate the terms under which it would be done.

Themes of shared and unshared values or involvement: The diversity of experience and interests was great within families. In the Hispanic families, for example, chldren had consistently greater contact with English speakers than their parents. Accompanying this was a potential for value conflicts in families. Hispanic families seemed to resolve successfully or avoid potential conflicts (which might have hindered self-motivated literacy) when they came to an understanding about rules regarding language use. Families tended towards speaking one language or the other in the household most of the time, thus creating an atmosphere of unity in the home. Around other issues, family members were equally as likely to seek to establish common values or involvement. Our adolescents seemed to have greater freedom to be with their friends at parties and other public events, if they balanced this with a display of common values to their family by attending church, helping around the house, or involving themselves in anything which was recognized as a family activity.

These themes were common to varying degrees in all the families we observed and were implicit in all concerns regarding literacy. Some families were more successful than others at achieving a balance between these oppositions.

In our investigation of writing we found that real limits existed in the extent to which we could collect and analyze the artifacts of writing in nonschool settings. There were simply too many of them and they varied tremendously in their content, structure and function. As the examples provided in the appendices demonstrate, these young people were potential writers often. If they believed that the situation called for writing, most times they were usually motivated to write. More relevant to education perhaps, is that to try to conduct a structural analysis of the texts themselves would have guided us away from many important considerations about the social supports which cause people to begin to write and to perfect their writing.

If we had analyzed the spelling, punctuation, grammar, sentence structure, and prose style of these artifacts, while ignoring the contexts from which they were generated, we would assumed some of the same biases in judgement to which teachers are prone when they examined the writing of their students.

Writing as it is judged by teachers in the classroom is at least partially decontextualized. Teachers typically judged the writing of their students against a set of criteria which they assumed to be the universal standards of good writing. It is questionable whether there are such universal standards! We are not in any way suggesting that teachers failed to apply common or worthwhile standards to their evluation of student writing. They clearly did apply such standards to this writing, but these varied from one grading session, student or teacher to the next. One teacher or grading session might typically emphasize punctuation while another focused more attention on spelling or the structure of ideas in a composition. So complex is language and so numerous are the qualities of a written text that it would be nearly impossible for a teacher working in a real life setting to apply consistent standards to writing evaluation.

Outside the classroom and in most institutional and informal settings beyond the school, writing is rarely evaluated for its internal merits alone. Writing must convey the proper ideas in the idiom that is appropriate -- not to a group so large as a speech community as a whole -- but to an audience as small as the peer group, the boss or the customer.

The common characteristic of all the artifacts presented here is that they were generated towards the accomplishment of a specific purpose. The note placed on the car windshield (Artifact #1, Appendix II) expressed an offer of assistance to a stranger. The card designed and distributed by an aspiring young entertainer (Artifact #1, Appendix II) was intended to promote his opportunities for employment. The rap lyrics (Artifact #17, Appendix II) were an aid to practice and creative composition in the perfection of a public performance. They were also intended to bring two brothers together as friends. The translation (Artifact #20, Appendix II) was produced to accomplish a work-related task. The artifact from a waitress's pad (Artifact #5, Appendix II) was intended to abbreviate items on a menu for communication to the restaurant chef. These artifacts share the additional characteristic of having moved the creator in the direction of accomplishing his or her specific purpose; ethnographic investigation revealed that all were successful (partially or completely) in accomplishing their purposes.

These artifacts bear witness to many other social characteristics as well. They demonstrate the writer's self-awareness. Most important, they indicate a willingness to write for both personal and practical reasons. They are charged with signs of a value system. They show an acute sensitivity to audience and potential audience response. They indicate an awareness of the limits of the knowledge shared bewteen writer and audience. These artifacts regardless of their neatness or the mastery of Standard English which they do or do not reveal -- are structured and evidence considerations for the presentation. The structural considerations and adherence to formal rules of written expression are evidence of the practical and cultural constraints on writing. Margins are typically imposed and adhered to by the writer. Concern for punctuation and spelling are strong influences and have often lead the writer to hypercorrection. The writers show a concern with the connectedness and mutual relevance of ideas. They have obviously made decisions about what to leave out of their writing. They have successfully dealt with many of the constraints of the written form, i.e., the fact that the audience is absent and the problem of self-presentation. All of these issues relate to the sociocultural dimensions of written formats which will be discussed in a subsequent chapter.

III. The Educational Environment and the School

During the fifteen months in which this research was conducted (July 27, 1981 through October 26, 1982), few topics generated as much controversy and media attention, or caused as much heated public debate and private concern in the City of Philadelphia as the state of public education in the city. Many factors contributed to this.

In November of 1981, three writers from the Philadelphia Inquirer reported on their methods and their findings, in a research project on the Philadelphia School District conducted from 1975 to 1979. Of the system's 273 schools, 20 were found to have a student population which was 95% white, while 68 were found to have a student body which was 95% black. While no patterns of discrimination could be found, it was determined that socio-economic level and rate of attendance were the greatest correlates of California Achievement Test scores. While CAT scores have risen steadily in each of the last six years, the level of those gains came in Title I programs slated for elimination by the current administration. The Philadelphia populace as a whole was described as "alienated from the school system." Four out of five of the city's residents have no children in the public schools. Further, one-third of all school-age children in Philadelphia attend private or parochial schools. The vast majority of Philadelphians therefore have no stake in the system. And those who do have relatively little power. Half of the system's students are from welfare families. Seventy percent belong to minority groups -- Black, Hispanic, Asian and

American Indian. By contrast, in the city as a whole, 20 percent of the city's residents receive welfare, and 42 percent are members of minority groups.

In contrast to the student population, both the school board and the school system's workforce are predominatly white and middle class. The school system, like the rest of the Philadelphia political scene, is run through hard fought ethnic politics. Of the teachers in the ten largest school districts in the United States, Philadelphia's is the highest paid (averaging $27,000 per annum) has the most generous fringe benefits (none of the other large districts provide legal services for their teachers); and boasts the highest absenteeism rate (three times the national average). Teachers in Philadelphia face little threat of dismissal, and benefit from a policy of ethnic patronage a product of the lobbying efforts of their respective ethnic groups. The Philadelphia Federation of Teachers is regarded by many as the real source of power in the district.

The age and state of dispair of the city's school buildings were also seen as a major problem. The $2.6 million spent on repairs in the 1979-80 school year was only one-fourth the amount spent five years earlier, while virtually every other budget item had risen. A lack of adequate supplies and up-to-date textbooks only contributes to the problem. (One school was found to be using geography books printed in 1954). The creation of magnet schools and options already available at the two "better schools" were seen as responsible for draining talented students from the big, comprehensive high schools where 55,000 of the city's 67,000 high school students are enrolled. And finally, the system and the city as a whole were until the appointment of a new superintendent in October of 1982, criticized for a lack of leadership. The new superintendent is the first Black to lead the district. She is also currently the highest paid public official in the City of Philadelphia. For parents with children in the system, she represents new hope.

The community's focus on the school system, however, was prompted primarily by the fact that teachers in the district had gone on strike the previous year, and another strike seemed inevitable during the 1981-1982 school year. This only contributed to many Philadelphians' loss of confidence in the schools' ability to educate their children. When the strike did occur, no one was surprised, but substantial tension, anger and polarization were generated. Black parents and teachers opened "strike schools," feeling betrayed by a system with no vested interest in the education of their children, while white teachers fought for a contract they felt they deserved.

The 1981-82 strike lasted for 50 days, and many people felt that "absolutely nothing was accomplished." This latter strike would ultimately have a significant impact on students and teachers, as well as on our research. The first semester lasted only twelve weeks, and the 24-week second semester was held only at the expense of most of the semester's holidays and part of the summer break. Additionally, extra thirteen minutes were added to each day's schedule. Although both students and teachers were anxious to return to school, some resentment surfaced between the teachers who had taught classes and those who had refused to cross picket lines during the strike. (One Wordsworth School teacher who had taught classes during the strike even got into a fist fight with some of the other teachers). Both students and teachers soon grew weary due to the length of the school year and minimal vacation time. Finally, the first semester was shortened further because of the time required for students and teachers to put the strike and its problems behind them and direct their attention to the process of education.

Two books and several articles have been written about the Wordsworth School. Its success was instrumental in the creation of similar schools in Chicago, St. Paul, Portland, Washington (D.C.) Paris (France) and Chritchurch, (New Zealand). The "Student's Guide to the Wordsworth School" describes Wordsworth School as "one educational answer to the unrest of the late sixties," whose philosphy "recognized that the community as a whole must be a partner in the learning process." The Wordworth School was begun in 1969 by the Director of Development for the School District of Philadelphia. It was designed to utilize the resources of public and private institutions in the city. Units were opened on three different compuses, enrolling 580 students, beginning with Alpha in February, then Beta in July of 1969. As the program expanded, a "teacher/administrator" was appointed for each unit, all reporting to an overall Director. In September 1969, Gamma was opened with both elementary and high school age students. However, it was soon decided that Wordworth School should remain a high school. Finally, the Delta and Zeta campuses were opened in September 1971 and September 1975, respectively. Total program enrollment is currently about 1,200. The school's current Principal succeeded its original director in August 1975. His approach to education is consistent with the school's founding philosophy.

Wordsworth School is organized into five "mini-schools," all operating under the philosophy of a "school without walls." Each unit has approximately 300 students, 10 teachers (one of whom also serves as a unit head), and secretary. Each unit is made up of students from all parts of the city, with varying backgrounds and levels of ability. While the staff in each unit work as a team to plan the program, the Principal is responsible for the program as a whole. A small central staff handles visitors, develops programs, processes records of new students and graduates, purchases supplies for the units, and increases the number of community-taught courses.

Each student is expected to earn 4.5 credits per year to graduate "on time." Frequent absence and lack of completion of the required work are sanctioned with academic probation. Students so sanctioned are offered special help from the staff which may involve a parental conference and after-class tutoring. Classes meet at various locations throughout the city, including churches, offices, college campuses and public institutions. Many classes are within walking distance of each other, but when students are required to travel more than a mile from one class to another, Wordsworth provides tokens for public transportation.

Most counseling is done in Tutorial by teachers (Tutorial Leaders), who assist students in selecting courses based on their interests and needs. Tutorial Leaders also made themselves available to assist students with personal and academic problems. In addition, each unit has a Guidance Counselor who assists Juniors and Seniors with preparation for and application for admission to college, and with career choices.

"Staff Courses" are taught by Wordsworth School's own teachers, and range from basic to advanced.

- o Basic Cources are assigned to those students who need to strengthen skills in specific subject areas.
- o Intermediate Courses are open to all students, regardless of grade level.
- o Advanced Courses are open to those students who feel they can do more difficult and challenging work.
- o Independent Study is a learning experience which the student achieves through a written contractual agreement with the teacher, in which he outlines his goald and sets a completion date.
- o Wordsworth Plus is an advanced course for those students who are judged superior. In this program, a set of courses is

> designed around a theme which has been selected for its "intellectually stimulating qualities."

"Tutorial" is the word used to describe a required course which meets three times each week. A tutorial is comprised of students of varying ages, and has a curriculum which is dedicated to promoting "reading and writing for pleasure," or "Sustained Reading and Writing." Each tutorial course requires a small collection of paperback books, and students must carry a copy book for writing. "Institution Courses" are those taught by volunteers in the city. They consist of classroom instruction, plus observation, work, or independent study. College-level courses are available at a number of colleges, community colleges and universities in the city. (About 80 students audit college courses each semester.) All courses range from .1 to 1.0 credits, based upon the number of times they meet each year. Absence and tardiness are penalized, although students frequently cut class on some campuses. Although homework is required in all classes, students suffer negative repercussions for not completing assignments. Students are allowed to invite visitors to attend their classes provided they receive approval of their Unit Head at least twenty-four hours in advance. Some students do take advantage of this policy.

The atmosphere of the Wordsworth School is relatively relaxed. Students address and refer to their teachers and staff including Unit Heads and to the school's principal, by their first names. Whenever there is a special problem to be discussed, a film to be viewed, or an important issue to be debated, a "Town Meeting" is called by the Unit Head. All students are strongly urged not to miss these meetings, which are considered "an important learning experience."

Throughout its existence, Wordsworth's experience has reflected that of other schools in large, urban, public education systems. It has suffered from "chronic budget shortfalls, perennial teacher strikes, custodial strikes, public transportation strikes, repeated teacher lay-offs, massive teacher transfer and reassignments," yet remaines "innovative" and "effective" (Lytle, 1981). Students are selected on the basis of a lottery system. To achieve racial balance, a separate lottery is conducted for each of eight sub-districts in the city. For the past three years state and federal desegration guidelines have restricted this lottery process by setting the percentage of non-white students designated schools must accept (currently 75 percent). This policy discriminates against non-white students seeking admission to Wordsworth School. For the past two years, students absent more than thirty days in the previous school year, and those scoring below the 16th percentile on a standardized reading test have been refused admission. In its first year, Wordsworth School received approximately 10,000 applicants for 150 places. It now receives about 1,000 applicants for 450 places each year. The program now received "fewer white students, fewer able students and fewer activist students" than in earlier years, and has a faculty described by its Director as "older, less zany, more professionally oriented, more degreed, more sympathetic with the teachers' union, and more conservative." Almost a third of the faculty are teachers who were involuntarily transferred to Wordsworth School, during the school district's lay-off and racial balance reassignments of a few years ago. However, professional satisfaction appeared high among Wordsworth School faculty. While the school district assigns teachers on the basis of a 33 pupil class size, Wordsworth School classes average about 20 students, due to the variety of courses taught by volunteers. At least 65% of Wordsworth's students each semester take a course monitored or taught by a non-faculty member. Wordsworth School also utilizes other school district programs, involving vocational skill centers, evening high schools, and late afternoon foreign language classes at a magnet high school.

A number of significant changes have been instituted since Wordsworth's inception. Basic skills are now stressed (each unit, for example, has a reading teacher), and grades are given in major subjects. Subjects participate in the school district's achievement and competency testing programs. And for the past six years, Wordsworth's students have dramatically out performed those of the two large comprehensive high school in the city with the student populations most similar to Wordsworth's socio-economic and racial characteristics. Wordsworth School ranks third among the city's 30 high schools in college placement (65% of Wordsworth graduates go on to pursue higher education), and its students rank 16th in socioeconomic characteristics. Within the past three years, the school has been cited once by the National Urban Coalition, twice by the U.S.O Office of Education, and once by the Pennsylvania Department of Education as an exemplary urban high school. Though at first heavily dependent upon foundations and federal categorical grants for support, Wordsworth School now receives the majority of its funds from the school district through its regular senior high school program.

IV. The Role of Writing in the Workplace

Writing skills are assumed to be useful for work and the pursuit of a career. It is assumed, furthermore, that the skills which adolescents acquire for writing in the classroom will prepare them to move into the workplace -- to attain a job, to communicate effectively about the practical aspects of their work, and to improve at their chosen occupation with the aid of their various literacy skills. We tested those assumptions in our interviews with employers and employees and in our participant observation of work settings.

Our finding was that the "fit" between writing and work is not nearly so neat as educators often expect it to be. The utility of writing is not separable from other important contextual variables. Potential employees rarely have the opportunity to demonstrate their literacy skills if they do not, first of all, make a good impression on their would-be employer. Making a good impression requires neatness, verbal articulatness, the ability to state socially desirable goals for employment, and a range of attributes related to self-presentation, but not literacy. Many of the positions of employment which were typically available to the adolescents in our research required no writing at the entry level, and it was only after they had established a position for themselves as trustworthy and intelligent workers (attributes which were themselves very subjective and varying) that these young people were given responsibilities which required writing. Many work settings in which we typically found these adolescents provided no overt support for the use of literacy skills. As the following case study reveals, the value of acquiring writing skills must be weighed against the necessity of demonstrating other competencies. A young learner receives more immediate support for perfecting these other competencies in the typical work settings of this North Philadelphia field site.

So far as adolescents are concerned, few occupations or workplaces played a greater role as employers than the fast food industry. In choosing to study aspects of the workplace, therefore, we decided early on to insure that at least one study be conducted in a fast food restaurant. We conducted a series of interviews and observations within a MacDonald's establishment in the northern end of the ethnographic field site.

As a background, one should know that this store was a particularly useful site because it's owner and manager, now a minority entrepreneur, began this career rather late in life after 20 years of service as a public educator. First he served as a teacher for 10 years in the New York School System, later he was an administrative Deputy District Superintendent in the Harlem system.

The of youths that these stores employ is very impressive. At any given time, the establshment referred to above employs 40 to 50 youths, and in the course of a year, because of a turnover rate of about 50%, employs 75-100 youths. Of this extensive workforce, only two are full-time employees. The first is the young man or woman who opens each store at 5 a.m. and then puts in an 8-hour day; the other is a night employee who shuts down the operation officially at 11 p.m. and spends another hour or so supervising the clean-up. All of the other approximately 48 employees typically are part-time. Many schedule their employment at MacDonald's around their school hours. It is interesting to note that a major factor in the MacDonald's corporate policy to close at 11:00 p.m. reflects child labor laws that, for the most part, prevent youth from working past that hour.

The operation of the MacDonald's store involves three salient characteristics: teamwork, efficiency and reliability. In addition to the owner-manager, or perhaps, an owner and a manager who are responsible adults running the store, the store typically employes 8 youths at any given time, 3 or 4 to run the front counter, and usually 3 or sometimes 4, at peak hours, to run the kitchen. There is definite teamwork and cooperation between these two sets of players.

All of the youths take part in the maintenance of the store. Tasks range from the most simple and menial ones such as sweeping, counter cleaning, or floor cleaning, to considerably more complicated ones -- tasks at a level which makes MacDonald's a high tech enterprise. At least once each day, someone must calibrate micro-processors on all of the food equipment, and this includes a surprising array of equipment. It is the responsibility of each of the staff to know how to calibrate these machines, how to load them, how to turn the systems on, how to make sure that all of the basic stops are properly set, and how to perform simple maintenance.

Calibration is quite a complicated task. At regular intervals during the day, these part-time workers have to use rather sophisticated measurement devices, digital thermometers of various sorts, and they must test the maintenance temperature of machines. If necessary, they must re-calibrate the micro-processor to an accurate standard. They do this in the morning, and as necessary in the course of the day. The training that these adolescents acquire lasts several weeks and includes a step-by-step modular introduction to the business of the MacDonald's system. There is little room for creativity, especially for part-time help. They follow a step-by-step guided curriculum, including hands-on training before they are actually placed to work at either the service counter or the kitchen equipment. All of this is an apprenticeship under the supervision of the manager or an experienced worker, but it is augmented by an extremely sophisticated and finely produced set of video tapes, 10 minutes long each. Employees are expected not only to put themselves through the basic training curriculum under the watchful eyes of the manager, but once they are given a job, they are expected to watch, at least occasionally, one or more of the tapes during their daily 20-minute break. In addition, there are regular in-service evaluations during which the manager carefully watches for the proper implementation of the system, and if necessary, gives the part-time employees rapid re-training.

The owner-manager looks for neatness, alertness, general intelligence, and direction in potential employees. He also looks for a person who is articulate. In the initial contact, the way a person presents himself orally as a responsible and directed person, takes a precedence over written or other technical skills. He looks for a person who shows evidence of being a team worker and is convinced that efficiency and profitability are undermined by the loner or person who "can't fit in." He also watches for evidence of extracurricular activities among adolescents as a measure of alertness and responsibility. Finally, he checks references.

The owner-manager says that he interviews every Thursday between 3 p.m. and 5 p.m, during which time he typically sees 20-30 adolescents. Many of them are sent to him by high school counselors. Durng this initial interview, the stress is entirely on oral and visual self-presentation. Although MacDonald's has a standardized interview schedule which they recommend to their managers and owner-operators, this owner feels that it is ineffective and he learns more about the employee-applicant by conducting a more informal and open-ended interview. At this first interview, he concentrates primarily on how they present themselves and answer questions about their interests and progress in school, who they approach life, whether they have a positive or negative attitude, and what their ambitions are. The articulateness he watches for is essential to the profitability of the shop, because much of MacDonald's reputation is based on customer relations. His insistence on a person who can cogently state his ambitions in life is motivated by his belief that he requires serious employees. He recognizes that many teens come in thinking of MacDonald's as a menial job, but he is offended by this attitude. According to him, the vast majority of adolescents fail the first interview. In fact, he only invites one or two out of that many for a second interview. He stressed that evidence of an excessively casual approach to the application procedure, such as tardiness, sloppiness or evident dishonesty would if the applicant were employed, be cause for immediate dismissal.

Also in the first interview, the owner administers a standardized employment application which, he claims is unique. He asks background information, including name and address, phone number, age, sex, the names and addresses of parents or adult guardians, their employment and some of their employment history. He also asks about the applicant's school record, the names of teachers and counselors, and requests references. Finally, he also asks when the applicant would be available for work.

The owner also reported that quite a large number of teen applicants fill out the employment applications incompletely. Most of them have a difficult time answering questions regarding days and hours of availability. He was uncertain as to whether they cannot read, or cannot comprehend the questions. Many applicants come to him upon the recommendation of counselors or teachers and he feels that these adults do not adequately prepare the kids for an employment interview. They seem to ignore the verbal and social interactional aspects of applying for a job.

When an applicant returns for a second interview, the owner probes more deeply into their skills. At this point he seeks cleanliness and aptitude for business. By this time he has verified their adult references and extra-curricular activities. Their academic records are more important to him at this point than in the initial interview. He notes that his store does over a million dollars of cash business and the profit margin is low. "It's a pennies' business," and he needs employees who are accurate in basic quantitative skills. Furthermore, he needs applicants who work well with others, because the efficient operation of the shop depends on collaboration.

Having succeeded in the second interview, applicants then enter the training curriculum at MacDonald's, which typically takes about a month. All are cross-trained in multiple tasks, so that there is redundancy in the shift workforce. Everybody in the shop is essential to an efficient operation, yet no one individual becomes irreplaceable at any given task. Quantitative ability is tested with a simple quiz which MacDonald's has developed, and which is geared to a fourth- or fifth-grade level. The owner notes that it is not essentizl to have ability beyond this, because the cash registers at the counters are "intelligence machines." To operate them, employees must read the menu, which is printed on the touch pad register board, read the total dollars, and read the amount of change that the machine instructs them to return to the customer. Very little of the training requires reading, although there are written reference materials for proper operation of every aspect of the business. However, the content of all written material is reinforced by videotape and direct experience.

When asked about common problems, the owner stressed deficiencies in attitude rather than in skill. He noted that many of the adolescents whom he had met were not interested in work, and showed no evidence of pride in their labor. Rather than seeing the work as a shared endeavor of value in itself, many applicants appeared interested in money only. This lack of concern accounts for over half of the failed applicants.

The owner-manager considered partially completed applications presumptuous. He articulated his disgust by saying "it's not my role to put people together." Incomplete applications cause a dilemma for him, in that he must decide whether or not to terminate the interview. His experience of the applicant prior to seeing the application enters into his decision, particularly his oral and visual self-presentation. If he feels that the applicant has presented himself well, spoken well of himself, made a good overall presentation of himself, he will elicit the missing information and help the applicant. On the other hand, if up until that point he has felt negatively towards the applicant, then the incomplete application is grounds for termination.

What emerges as salient in the owner's assessment of need is that the teenage workforce be made up of responsible, reliable team workers. These personal attributes are valued above all other technical skills. The level of technical skills required is low. Organized extra-curricular activities are taken as signs of ability to work with others.

At this restaurant, and probably most others, technical skills and even reading skills are not perceived as crucial, because of the systemaic modular training curriculum, during the intial month or six weeks, as well in the periodic in-service training experience. These are augmented by carefully prepared audio and video tapes of each step or component of the MacDonald's system, including the level of mathematical and reading skill which is demanded in MacDonald's. Virtually no writing skill is required for these position.

V. "Rap" -- The Ethnographic Analysis Of A Folk Genre As Related To Literacy

One of the research methods which proved most fruitful was the investigation and description of naturally occurring speech and performative events which either contained a written component or witnessed an obvious self-consciousness and structured use of language among our respondents. That event which received the most attention in our research was a folk genre known as rapping or rap music, an oral tradition of narrations and boasts which are spoken (usually in rhyming couplets) over contemporary black music. The form and content of rap lyrics draw on several generations of black urban folklore (e.g., toasts and sounding), yet the genre as it is practiced today, contains its own unique characteristics.

Uniqueness is one of the salient issues when considering rap as it might be related to literacy, for it causes one to consider many of the common assumptions about folk and elite traditions. Many assume wrongly that folklore is repetitive and collective, whereas literature (as the possession of elites and formal institutions) is regarded as unique and individual (Szwed, 1981: personal communication). In actuality, each performance of a folk text (rap music included) is unique and shaped in an ongoing fashion by the interaction between the audience and performer. Formal writing and folk performance have in common that their texts are the products of particular contexts. Uniqueness is a factor of audience expectations and is derived from specific social contexts.

Rap expressed the sentiments and dramatized certain norms of self-presentation for many of the youths in our research site. It was furthermore, among the most significant organizing influences in their lives outside of home and school. In the sense that many rap lyrics involve self-pronouncement and displays of the most admirable qualities possessed by the performer, the primary function of rap is persuasive. Therefore, from a dramatist's perspective (Burke, 1969), rap music is rhetorical. Of central importance to the present discussion is that rapping fosters a substantial amount of self-motivated writing among these adolescents. Most of the youths who perform rap at local clubs and private parties write rap lyrics, some producing literally volumes of notebooks filled with original poetry.

Ethnographic research, combined with the examination of texts of rap lyrics suggested that there are numerous similarities between what rap lyricists do with language and what teachers want students to accomplish in their writing. Writers of rap are, first of all, purposeful with language. They show a concern with the rhythmic and tonal qualities of language and will go to great lengths to select the proper lexical item to convey their desired meaning, while remaining within the limits of this genre. Rappers and their audiences bring a consistent, if implicit sense of esthetics to the rap performance, and it is clear that audience response is forceful in shaping the rapper's presentation. Furthermore, rap lyricists use literary devices similar to those taught in the classroom and have particular techniques for accomplishing important stylistic goals in their raps, such as maintaining thematic coherence. Finally, the production of rap lyrics, as it occurs in natural settings, involves many types of social interaction which can be vital to the acquisition of a much broader range of literacy skills. With these factors in mind, we addressed ourselves to the following question:

> Might these black and hispanic writers of rap be attempting to achieve similar ends through identical or complimentary means as those which teachers are attempting to accomplish in classroom instruction?

The History and Social Context of Rap Performance

Much has been written about the importance of verbal artistry in the Black community. Folklorists and sociolinguists (i.e., Abrahams, Kochman, Labov, Mitchell-Kernan and others), have contributed significantly to our understanding of the high esteem in which the skillful manipulation of language is held. It was therefore not surprising that our efforts to identify and describe literacy related behavior in community settings, led us to the study of the phenomenon in contemporary Black music known as rapping.

The term rapping has its origins in the Black community, its usage even having been traced to a variety of West African English spoken in Sierra Leone (Dalby 1972). It has been defined as "persuasive speech... used to manipulate others to one's own advantage (Abrahams 1972); and as "a sales pitch with the rapper advertising the goods he has to offer.. given and received not on the authenticity of the factual content but on how convincingly the pitch is delivered" (Abraham and Gay 1972).

This term has been used to refer to the rhetorical style of the verbally adept political leader -- H. "Rap" Brown, for example, former head of the Student Non-violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), received his nickname because of his consideral verbal expertise demonstrated during the most militant period of the civil rights era. It has also been used to refer to the Black male's ability to impress members of the opposite sex through the use of clever verbal strategies, or simply to describe ordinary conversation, although with "a high degree of personal style" (Kochman 1972). Most recently, however, this term has been used to refer to a genre of Black music whose influence has extended far beyond its original circle of popularity, (Black adolescents, particularly in the northeastern section of the United States). In its current usage, rapping has come to refer to a form of oral poetry, performed over the background of contemporary Black music. It is characterized by the rhythmic relation of words to music, rhyming couplets, and the manipulation of prosodic features such as the length and stress of individual syllables.

The evolution of the genre is disputed in the Black community. A plausible hypothesis, however, is that rapping in its current sense grew out of the call-and-response tactics used by adolescents spinning records at parties, as a means of engaging the audience and encouraging them to "get up and dance." Gradually, the disc jockey assumed a greater role verbally, until he was speaking in rhyme throughout an entire instrumental record. If he was skillful enough, full audience participation would be ensured. Experimentation was eventually introduced by employing two or more "rappers" at the same time. Finally, rappers became so adept at their craft that they became the main attraction. In this way, inner city adolescents gained local notoriety or even, as in the case of "Curtis Blow" the "Sugar Hill Gang" and "Grand Master Flash and the Furious Five," national recognition. Almost immediately, adolescents in the cities of the Northeast, in emulation of their peers who were able to gain considerable success in this manner, began to create and perform raps themselves.

Performers of rap hope to accomplish a variety of rhetorical goals in their performance:

- to gain and maintain the involvement of their audience in the music and in their lyrical renditions or, simply, to entertain
- to present themselves -- particularly those traits ascribed by sex role -- in a desirable manner
- to enhance their own personal self-esteem, while damaging the reputation of others (as in the ritual exchange of insults)
- to assert and develop a personal identity for themselves, one which is clearly exaggerated to the point of being fictional
- to alter social opinion, for example, for convincing the audience of their superiority (particularly those members of the audience of the opposite sex)
- to demonstrate personal power by effectively controlling the audience
- to gain membership and status in an extended peer group

Performances of rap are generally framed in sexual competiton. Usually rappers will determine whether they have successfully accomplished their rhetorical goals by how enthusiastically the audience responds to their performance.

Above all, rap music must be rhythmically and melodically pleasing. Listeners generally evaluate the skill of a rapper by how able he is at maintaining a beat. He must also be capable of coordinating his rap with the music. The foremost quality of this genre recognized as important is that it be appropriate for dancing.

Listeners also have an unacknowledged, yet consistent set of expectations about the use of language in rap music. Audiences will not listen to the content of lyrics if they fail to synchronize with the music, but their expectations are more elaborate than this. They have criteria for distinguishing between "good" and "bad lying" in raps. A good lie seems to be one which is an exaggeration which goes beyond the mundane, but is not extreme to the point of being flagrant. Listeners often say that a good rap must "make sense." By that they seem to mean that a topic must be thoroughly developed in a rap. Yet, they also recognize that a topic may be overdeveloped. Listeners seem to prefer thematic development which is regularly interrupted by choral repetition. They also insist that the transistion between topics within a rap or between rappers within a single performance be executed smoothly. In the texts of rap performances one can easily identify lines which are devoted solely to transition between ideas.

Strategies Employed in the Production and Performance of Rap

The role of rapper is best conceptualized as that of story-teller or orator. Like these characters, the rapper is concerned most with the public presentation of his or her language skills in an entertaining manner. Because rap is fundamentally an oral genre, the rap lyricist is less concerned with the perfection of words on a page and more concerned with the delivery of self on a stage. In addition to feeling obliged to perfect his or her talents with words then, the rapper must develop talents for responding to the accompanying music and to the audience. The semantic content of a rap is often regarded as secondary to both the music and the audience response. It is appropriate to view the rapper as performing in competition with the music and distracting activities -- such as dance and drink -- in which the members of the audience are constantly involved. In order to effectively compete, to manipulate the performative context of his/her benefit, the rapper needs a variety of skills:

- the lexical and syntactic skills of describing the events, details and facts contained in the rap so that they are esthetically pleasing
- a structure for ordering and introducing these utterances (often a structure identical to that found in other song narratives)
- a set of skills for the embellishment of the rap performance

It is this last set of skills which seem to be most essential to a successful public performance of a rap, for it is these skills which dramatize the rap performance. Embellishment skills include such features of the rap performance as (1) the rapper's ability to mimic voices, for example to imitate radio disc jockeys or simply to change the tone and pitch of the voice; (2) the ability to coordinate the spoken rap with changes in the background music, for example, "rapping hard" when the music softens and interrupting the rap to dance when the percussion if foregrounded, (3) the ability to interact with the audience, by a variety of techniques such as call/response or the use of mock dialogue, where the rapper talks as if the audience were engaged in conversation. Certainly, this list is incomplete and serves only to illustrate the multidimensional character of a rap performance and the many constraints placed on the rapper who hopes to achieve a successful performance.

Writing is secondary in the production of rap. The rap is written only for the purposes of refinement and memorization. In fact, what is written often goes through several stages of editing and refinement and, when performed, may be completely dissimilar to the original script. Many rappers, for example, pride themselves on the spontaneous production of raps which consist of the combination of lines from previously written raps. Indeed, most raps draw upon previously recorded raps, the lyrics of other popular music, and various other sources. Although originality is valued, it is by no means essential to the production of rap.

Once the first draft of the written text is produced, it may then be shared with another rapper and subjected to a process of co-editing, with both individuals checking specifically for the rhyming couplets and the compatibility between the rhythm of the music and syllabication of the text.

We noted that there existed acknowledged experts in the production of rap, who were frequently consulted in this manner.

Rhetorical Skills at Work in Rapping.

That rappers are intentionally rhetorical in their performances is made clear by the following quote, in which one of our repsondents discussed his use of "busting" (verbal dueling) in a rap:

- I was going against somebody. They tried to bust on me first. I (always) wait for them. If they bust on me, then I got a rap that . . . It don't bust on them, but it tells them what gonna happen if they keep on doing it. And then, if they keep on doin' it, that when I unload.

  Its time I hear from some good competition. / This brother's acting like he's on a mission. / I'm about the rap, but he's about the bust. / I make the eagle on the dollar sing "In God we trust." I'm not about to bust or (start) clowning around. / But I'll give you fairwarning that I can throw down.

Numerous skills related to the acquisition of stylistic sophistication and rhetorical effectiveness can be found in the production of rap music. Some of these skills are evident in the written rap, while others emerge only in the oral performance of rap. Knowledge of those skills that are present in rap, as well as of those skills which may be absent can inform educational intervention. Many of the skills found in rap are essential to the development of writing skills in general:

- the use of dialogue
- the use of the third person in narration, although minimally employed
- the ability to fictionalize a character
- the ability to decontextualize items from other sources and reconstitute that item for original purposes in the author's own writing

Other skills common to rap were recognized by the teachers in our research as necessary in the development of the critical esthetic senses which are the requisites of persuasive writing:

- that rap lyricists and members of their audience distinguish good lies from bad lies can be developed into an ability to distinguish convincing from unconvincing rhetoric

- the ability to recognize when a topic has been overly or incompletely developed is immediately translatable into an understanding of the limits of elaboration and brevity in writing

- rap enthusiasts' insistence that each rap have a central theme suggests that rap lyricists recognize the need for thematic coherence and may lend itself to the development of thematic structures in written texts

Rap lyricists typically introduce the topic of their raps with admirable directness and succinctness:

- I was at this party just adoing real fine / until I seen this girl with a big behind / I was at this party, rappin hard / Givin' out my lines and givin' out my card / Well, I went to the girl and I said "hello, . . . / I go by the name of Jazzy Jo." / Yes see, we got in my car and we went to the park. / You see, we took off the lights so you know it was dark.

Often they communicate effectively in writing by structuring their raps according to a chronology of events, as in the previous example.

Rap lyricists were extremely creative and equally exacting in their uses of metaphor:

- I worked her body til she went insane. / She started talkin' like Lois Lane. / She said, "Hey, sir. I'm your fan, / cause you did me badder than Superman."

- I asked her name. Her name was Shirl. / She was the one with the jeri curl. / About five foot three, short and sassy. / She weren't no girl that looked like Lassie. / Now she was good and looked just right. / Her Jordache fit her butt real tight.

- I'm the sure shocking/ the body rocking / the disco shaking / the earth quaker/ the king microphone / the telephone young men won't leave alone. --- when you spend that money and you take me out / you'll find out what I'm all about / "Cause I'm too hot to trot / I'm too cold to stroll / I'm bold enough to make your body fold. / I'm guaranteed to make your nature rise. / If I don't get the thing that I mention / that's when I start crying for attention.

What remains to be investigated in these texts is the frequency with which each of the major tropes (metaphoric devices) is used and the semantic domains from which they typically draw. What is apparent, however, is that the use of topics for these rap lyricists is not strictly metonymic or associational.

Rap lyrics also demonstrated a capacity among rappers to distill and master the elements of another expressive form and adapt it for their own pruposes, as evidenced in the adaptation of the introduciton to the well known television show Star Trek:

- The Bod Squad vs. Four Galour & One More

  > Rapping, The Final Frontier. This rap Contains The Funktivity of FIVE Young Brothers. There Mission: To Seek Out Parties And Microphones, And to Rock Shock Every Neighborhood. There Goal: To Blow Out Every Amp In The Universe. To Boldly Go Where No M.C. Have Gone Before.

In addition to these rhetorical skills, a number of techniques emerge in the public performance of rap which were conceivably, if not so immediately translatable into writing skills:

- the ability to control an audience.

  > Get down everybody. Get live / We're gonna burn up the place from mine to five. / Say you burn up the place, then you mark the bass. / And then you listen to the drums, while I set the pace / I set the pace and then I say a riddle. / I'm rockin' to the beat. Step up the mike a little, / Cause I'll keep on rocking to the break of dawn. I'll perk up your body/ help you get it on.

- the ability to combine morphemes in a unique, but understandable fashion:

  > When the women get hot, they like to go. / They want to go far for a little more. / I always keep some rhythms in store. / Now the beat I rock to is full of steam. / I'll make you rock and shock til you wanna scream. / I'm jammin' to the beat, let me take you by the hand. I'll take you to boogie body land. / But if you wanna go where the funk is free, I'll take you to the land of funktivity.

From Community to Classroom

Rapping, like writing, is a manner of self-presentation. In a discussion of the forms of rapping Kochman (1975) identifies two characteristics inherent in it:

- expressivity - the projection of the rapper's personality onto the scene or elicitation of a generally favorable response from the audience; and
- directiveness - the use of rapping to manipulate and control the audience to get them to give up or do something.

To this we can add that the successful rapper must be:

- convincing -- even to the point of gaining the audience's acceptance of exaggeration;
- artful - as defined by the audience; and
- engaging of the audience - since this is generally the best way of accomplishing the goals of the directiveness of the rap.

Kochman also observed that "one raps to rather than with a person, supporting the impression that rapping is to be regarded more as a performance than a verbal exchange." (Ibid.)

Finally, in our investigation we discovered that the production of raps is a collaborative process. Once the first draft of the written text is produced, it is often shared with another rapper and subjected to a process of co-editing, with both individuals monitoring specifically for the rhyming couplets and the synchronization of the rhythm of the music with that of the text. (Indeed, this type of feedback from peers is sought by most professional writers prior to submission of a final draft.)

Information gathered regarding rapping was useful in directing our pedagogical approach. To begin with, an examination of the five characteristics of a successful rap as outlined above, reveals that these same characteristics contribute significantly to the production of effective writing in any form. It was evident, therefore, that these adolescents were able to demonstrate many litaracy-related skills which they were assumed not to possess.

We also attempted to incorporate the notion of performance into classroom instruction, because of its significance in the production of raps. Performance requires an audience, and our desire to create an audience for classroom performance led to a focus on the collaborative process in the production of a "final draft." Students were encouraged to seek review and involvement of their peers, and to make revisions on the basis of their comments before submitting their finished products to the teachers. The results was a more enthusiastic approach to writing assignments, and a significant improvement in the quality of their written performance.

By identifying and describing the genre of written/performative expression known as rapping, we were able then, to improve both teachers' and researchers' understanding of the forms of writing appropriate for the classroom. Through the examination of the process of the production of rap, we were able to identify key elements, which were successfully incorporated into pedagogical strategies. This was effective in creating a more spontaneous and productive learning environment in the classroom.

The Strengths and Limitations of Rap in Educational Strategies

Certainly the skills found in writing appeared to leave much to be desired among educators. The enthusiasm and resultant literacy events associated with rap contributed very little to the development of spelling competence, for example. Rap lyricists did not use punctuation with consistent appropriateness either. They were, furthermore, admittedly unconcerned with thematic conclusion, as one of the characteristics of rap music is that it drones on until the person spinning the records fades one song out and mixes another song in. We did not believe that the panacea for failing writing skills among minority adolescents was to be found in rap music alone.

Yet, even the weaknesses of rap lyrics - once they are understood - we believe could be tapped as a resource for the development of instructional approaches in the classroom. Faulty punctuation found in the writing of rappers might be explained as the product of interference between what is appropriate to oral performance and what is necessary for fluid writing. Rappers who followed the common dictum "write like you talk," may have been misled into relying on the wrong sources for models of correct punctuation. Likewise, the knowledge gained from analysis of rap that many students have few indigenous examples for bringing their writing to a close, whereas they have ample experience in introducing topics succinctly and directly, may help teachers to effectively direct their energies in the classroom towards utiliziing the strengths and remedying the weaknesses inherent in their students' writing.

Most importantly, perhaps, this exercise in comparing writing in formal and informal settings demonstrated that adolescents are impelled to write in settings outside the classroom and for particular, unofficial purposes, e.g., self-amusement. The differences that exist between writing events that occur inside and outside of the classroom may be characterized in terms of purpose, performance, audience, process of composition, structure, theme, style and context. We examined the written composition process, in a variety of settings, noting that writing as it occurs outside of the classroom is impelled (self-motivated, collectively produced and appraised), whereas writing as it generally occurs in the classroom is compelled (other-motivated, produced and appraised by a smaller group -- generally teacher and student).

Raps may be useful in facilitating students' understanding of the use of various literary and rhetorical devices. By describing these devices, and contrasting their use in non-directed writing (rapping), with that desired or expected in directed, (classroom) writing, teachers might convince students that what is required of them in the classroom is not altogether unfamiliar. By drawing upon the pedagogical abilities of experienced classroom teachers, and tapping literacy skills employed in non-school settings to inform classroom instruction, we were able to facilitate learning and thereby foster improvement in the quality of students' writing.

This appraisal brought us to consider how the boundaries between formal (inside the classroom) and informal (outside the classroom) writing are created and maintained and may be an impediment to literacy.

These findings led us to evaluate the differences between teenage writing as it occurs outside of and in the classroom, with the intention of applying those findings to institutional writing goals. The kind of written communication which was required in the educational setting was shown to discourage those abilities and to interfere with those processes that the adolescent brings to writing by changing the composition process from collaborative to solitary, the audience from a speech community of peers to the teacher, the context from shared meanings to referential independence of text, the theme from self/concrete to other/abstract and the mode from poetic/narrational to expository prose.

VI. Bilingualism and Bidialectalism: Social Constraints and Language Use

It would be inappropriate to attempt an analysis of writing acquisition among Hispanic youths without also understanding the attitudes, beliefs, values and social constraints that determine their overall attitudes about language use. How people feel about themselves in relation to other people will vary from setting to setting, as will the way in which they present themselves in public settings. Through the observation of Hispanic adolescents in the community and the school, it was discovered that the social constraints which determine the utility of one dialect or language (in this case, Standard English, Standard Spanish, Puerto Rican Vernacular English, and Black Vernacular English Vernacular) are crucial to writing performance, the acquisition of writing skills, and the evaluation of these skills on behalf of teachers. It was also shown that the assumptions made by Puerto Rican bilingual speakers about the appropriateness of a dialect or language will vary, depending on contextual variables such as the participation of other speakers or the social goals that a speaker/writer wishes to accomplish.

Choices about language use (e.g., dialect preference and strategies of code switching) are instrumental in self-presentation. How one uses his particular linguistic repertoire will determine how that person is viewed by others, who his or her friends and enemies will be, and a range of other factors related to social affiliation. This is particularly crucial in multiethnic public situations, where individuals must adhere to certain norms and accomplish practical tasks without overt reliance on ethnicity to determine how or with whom they interact. Uses of dialect and language were of particular concern to the Hispanic students in our research and played a major role in how they were regarded by their peers in the classroom.

Ethnogrpahic observation in the classroom did not direct us towards any way of clearly distinguishing Hispanics from other students. Hispanic students were fewer in number than either Black of Anglos. We worked in no classes with more than two Hispanic students. Furthermore, the department of these students did not allow them to be readily recognized among other students. Hispanic students generally, were heard speaking English, both in focused classroom activity and in social gatherings between classes or around the school. They spoke either standard or vernacular English most often while at school and in the classroom, they seemed just as likely to chose their friends among blacks as among other Hispanics. Only occasionally would one Hispanic student address another in Spanish when within the public domain of school. Nor were the unique characteristics of Hispanic students easily discernible by teachers. They often commented that their students had English language problems due supposedly to interference with Spanish, but could not easily identify the specific indicators of these problems. All of these details caused us to believe either that we were observing a subset of Hispanic adolescents who were very assimilated to American society or who were extremely flexible in their behavioral and linguistic repertoires.

In their homes and communities these same adolescents were not nearly so free of behavioral markers by which their Hispanic ethnicity could be identified. With one exception, the parents of these adolescents were all native Spanish-speakers and the majority were born in a Spanish-speaking country, usually Puerto Rico. Most of these adolescents were from households where Spanish was spoken exclusively or at least when adults were present. Most lived near the core of Philadelphia's Hispanic community and frequented the stores, churches and service organizations where Spanish was spoken almost exclusively. Outside of school these adolescents seemed much more likely, to select their friends among other Puerto Ricans. With these friends they were observed speaking English and Spanish, or a dialectal variation combining features of both, which might be identified as Puerto Rican Vernacular English. Their language and dialect preferences seemed to vary so noticeably across community and school settings, that the object of our research became to understand the social constraints which prompted this variation and the consequences of these linguistic stratgies for education.

Two factors presented themselves throughout the research which emphasized the importance of social forces in writing and demonstrating the ability to write. The first of these relevant factors is that learning and being able to demonstrate a competence are collectively influenced. This is best illustrated by an experience related by one of the ethnographers during the course of this research:

> As a group of us was looking for the refreshment center we walked out of the room and turned left. I was distracted in a conservation and not paying close attention to where I was going. The group of us went one way and did not realize we were off the track until we had walked for about 50 yards. We soon encountered another group of people who had made the same mistake. At that point I said, "Well, maybe its' back this way." We walked in the direction I suggested and eventually found our way to a place where we climbed the stairs to the second floor. At this point we became disoriented again. But before we could become discouraged someone came walking along behind us and said, "Oh, it's just around the corner." Subsequently, we arrived at the refreshment center. Finding our way took at least eight different decisions and at least three different people, however.

The point of this anecdote is simply that individually this group was ignorant but collectively it was capable of remembering and accomplishing a complicated task. This is precisely what happens in the classroom. Students know collectively what they do not know individually. Classrooms, in fact, are often structured to make individuals appear ignorant, because they share knowledge rather than posses it by themselves.

Our intervention to improve writing instruction in the classroom required that we allow students to rely on their collective knowledge to respond to a greater number of tasks assigned by their teachers. This entailed working with the way participation in classroom events was structured. Because ethnicity and language ability were of concern to all students and Hispanic students in particular, our modification of participant structures in the classroom involved paying attention to the way Hispanic students presented their ethnicity in the classroom.

The management of involvement came to be seen as the most crucial concern as the reseachers began to work with teachers tc improve the quantity and quality of student writing in these classrooms. The management of student involvement seemed to be a constant concern for the teachers who participated in this research. When the research team first began observation in the classroom, teachers and students were in a stand-off. In these classrooms teachers assumed almost total responsibility for the activities there. They regarded it their duty to educate and to do everything that education implied. For many of these teachers this meant keeping the class in control and dispensing information in a unidirectional manner to their students. Teachers often took responsibility for always being the one with the correct answer to whatever questions arose and generally for creating curriculum by themselves. They carried the burden of the class. Students, on the other hand, were bored and uncooperative. They complained that school had little relevance to their own lives.

In the instructional intervention conducted by the research team, the researchers attempted to take some of the responsibility for the management of involvement away from of the teacher. This was accomplished by introducing activities in the classroom which were known to involve these adolescents of their own volition outside of school. Music, sports, fashion and work were introduced as topics for discussion so that researchers could observe the impact of these activities on classroom interaction. All were known to be topics of concern for students outside of school.

In this restructuring of the classroom around writing, ethnicity was a powerful force influencing writing, just as it influenced language use and self-presentation. In the school, many comments about ethnicity were directed by peers at certain attributes of others, such as dress, musical preference, ability to dance in particular styles, or involvement in certain sports. Students also expressed their ethnicity and their values regarding ethnicity by their social affiliations and dialect use. Puerto Rican students recognized that they would be accepted by their peers and judged as nonprejudiced if they made friends among Anglo and Black students. They also saw that their ability to use items of Black English reduced the distance between themselves and Black students who were invariably in the majority. Opposing behavioral markers of ethnicity were imposed by teachers (e.g., when teachers expected the competent display of Standard English, while the use of Black English Vernacular was a method of ensuring peer group solidarity).

Puerto Rican students were influenced by two sets of constraints in the classroom, one which aligned them with the teacher and the other which aligned them with their peers. In aligning with their peers, they often manifested behavioral attributes of dialect, dress, music and sports which identified them with Black students. Other Puerto Rican students chose not to align themselves strongly with any particular group. A third strategy seemed to entail a regularly shifting alignment, where students at times responded to the behavioral demands of their teachers and at other times met the expectations of their peers. Whatever the particular strategy, Puerto Rican students seemed consistently to be manipulating various behavioral markers of class and ethnicity. Those who had the greatest overall success in the classroom (success being defined as both social acceptance by peers and satisfactory evaluation by teachers) seemed to achieve a certain degree of ethnic and class neutrality.

Puerto Rican students sought to establish a personal neutrality in the classroom through various means. Some were able to speak Standard English with facility in many situations and to switch into Vernacular English only as appropriate around peers. These students were generally appreciated and positively evaluated by their teachers. Our data suggest that their affiliations with black students outside of school were relatively limited. Other students seemed strongly affiliated with black students. They spoke a clearly distinguishable Black English Vernacular and claimed a preference of those styles of dress, music, and recreation that were identified with Black students in the school. These students seemed to be evaluated by teachers as having the same language problems affecting their writing as did the Black students. A third strategy of Puerto Rican students in these classrooms was to be notably quiet and generally nonaffiliated with other students altogether. Teachers expressed a difficulty in appraising the special skills and needs of these students. It is interesting to note that there was no apparent relation between their use of any of these strategies and the degree to which Spanish was used in their homes, yet all achieved some form of neutrality in the classroom.

Our implementaton increased the involvement in writing for each of these students, but to varying degrees. Those students who were aligned with both teachers and peers, as well as those who were not clearly aligned with either group were allowed to employ familiar subjects and formats in their writing. Their writing was a way to explore those subjects which they were already motivated to learn. For those students, who typically focused on meeting the demands of teachers, the writing activities employed in our implementation were a way to develop skills which they felt might also enhance their relations with peers. The mere fact that our writing activities lead to increased writing among the quiet and nonaligned students meant that teachers had more clues in identifying their particular strengths and weaknesses.

Additional enhancements to writing resulted from our activities which affected those Puerto Rican students who were aligned with Black students and appeared to be thoroughly bidialectal. These students incurred even more advantages from interaction with Black students. For them, ethnic boundaries were all but erased around the production of particular written pieces. They benefited extensively from the advice and co-editing they received from their peers. Because Black students constituted the majority in each classroom, these Hispanic students could rely on a greater number of individuals for input and responses while writing. Surprisingly, as these students gained an increased sense of solidarity among their peers, they also seemed more likely to make reference to their own ethnicity as Puerto Ricans, as if to suggest that, because their acceptance in the classroom was more certain, their ethnicity was a less salient feature of their public styles of self-presentation.

In sum, our focus on Hispanic students demonstrated that the success of writing instruction is dependent on the management of involvement in the classroom. Ethnicity and its markers, one of the most prominent of which is language or dialect are essential to the management of involvement. Ethnicity is essential because it is fundamental to self-presentation and participation in group activities, whether they occur inside or outside of the classroom. The ethnic identity of Puerto Rican Hispanic adolescents was shown to be somewhat flexible or easily obfuscated in the classrooms where this research was conducted. The reseachers realized that these Hispanic students were altering some of the features of their ethnic identity (e.g., language, dress, musical preferences) in order to participate in classroom activities in a certain manner. In particular, they were interested in maintaining their relationships with their non-Hispanic peers. In this process of aligning with peers, they sometimes limited their options for participation in the teacher-sanctioned activities of the classroom. This also presented the possibility that their special needs as bilingual learners would be overlooked.

VII. Formats: A Tacit Dimension of Writing and Learnig to Write

Our ethnography revealed that members of a particular group regularly made judgements about the gross characteristics of written material, without having direct or thorough knowledge of the word and meaning content of that material. Some of our respondents trusted the journalism in a particular newspaper because it was identified as "the black newspaper of Philadelphia." The males in our research regularly assumed that fashion magazines held nothing of interest to them because these periodicals were "for girls." (This expectation was in the process of transformation with the introduction of Gentlemen's Quarterly, in which many of our male respondents were beginning to take an interest.) Conflicts arose regularly between parents and our respondents about their reading of pornography, even though parents insisted that they would "never read that kind of trash," and thus could not know that they contained that was objectionable. Each of these examples relates to the symbolic value and form of written materials - not to their content.

Such expectations of particular types of publications were often so firmly set and so closely linked to the culture of literacy (Smith 1981) that the content of the written words in those publications was considered secondarily or not at all. Teachers often refused to read messy assignments. Students hesitated to express their feelings to one another in slam books after they entered high school, because such expression was assumed to be childish behavior. Parents of our respondents sometimes chose to read a weekly news magazine, U.S. News and World Report, because it was assumed to contain more objective and conservative journalism and therefore was preferable to other weekly news magazines, such as Newsweek. All of these were choices about print, but not about code or content. They were choices about the symbolic value attached to particular artifacts, not about the words, but about the kinds of pages and binding they appeared in and about the way they were placed on those pages. These choices revealed information about the relation between speaker/writer and the audience/reader.

To describe such behavior, we propose the term format to refer to the entire set of formal and social constraints that govern behavior as writers place words in a graphic context and as readers respond to written artifacts. At a superficial level, formats are only a standardized system for organizing information on a page. Lotto (1967) has described formats as "accepted conventions." The process whereby writers and readers agree to accept these conventions is a sociocultural one. Preferred formats were seen to differ between the school and community, for example. Adolescents showed a greater appreciation for comic books and magazines than for textbooks. Just the opposite was true for teachers, who took measures to keep certain magazines and newspapers out of their classrooms. Formats were seen to change over time, as with the replacement of an institution's administration, when the means of record keeping and intra-institutional communication are replanned. Formats can communicate the intentions of a written document with a force equal to any utterances they contain. We cannot, therefore, consider formats as neutral or mechanical ways of standardizing the presentation of information. For standardization is also a matter of social convention and, although formats appear to be unalterable components of institutions they are always negotiable.

Teaching and learning to write are in essence the negotiation of conventions for formatting. Students and teachers in our research regularly assumed that format was only about the structuring of information on a page. In actuality, they could not talk about the structuring of information without considering sociocultural and experiential issues. Teaching expository writing, for example, was deceptively straightforward. Teachers contended that the fundamental element of expository writing was organizing information for presentation to the reader. This organization invariably required that writers prioritize information and make decisions about what to edit out of their writing. As soon as the writers attempted to assign priorities and omit information in their writing, sociocultural and experiential issues were involved. The process of prioritization and omission, as it occured between teachers and students, involved statements like "You can't include that; the reader wasn't there. He doesn't live in your neighborhood." Because one cannot understand and use a format without considering the relative importance of various sorts of information, formats were shown to be of powerful sociocultural significance.

It is not surprising that teachers did not regularly teach about the social conventions which govern the use of written words on a page (formats) because to do so would have been to examine many of the social conventions which are the rules of our social institutions: who defers to whom, what is popular and what is high art, what is ethnic/minority and what is mainstream, what is appropriate and what is inappropriate. To talk of formats is to bring all of these issues into question. To consider these questions is to cause disruption in the classroom. This fact was demonstrated in acute detail when we spent one class session trying to categorize particular songs that were familiar to students. The superordinate categories in the taxonomy which the students generated were Rock Music which was of greatest appeal to Anglo students and Soul Music (which was of greatest appeal to Black students). Students enjoyed the exercise and had no trouble placing their favorite songs under the appropriate headings until we came to one song which was currently receiving substantial radio exposure, but which none of the students particularly liked. All agreed that, while it was melodically and rythmically pleasing, its theme was "silly." A discussion resulted which quickly grew into an argument, where students were no longer trying to identify the song as Rock or Soul. They were arguing about labeling the song as "Black or "White" music. The argument disrupted class for an entire week. This incident demonstrated that some of the most basic and superficially simple decisions which writers must make are, in fact, quite complicated and saturated with sociocultural considerations.

Format is a statement about concerns of purpose and policy (Lloyd-Jones, 1982), writer/audience relations, voice, content relevance, subject coherence, and topic. Once these concerns are addressed by the writer, he has created a format. Conversely, once he has established a format for himself, many of these concerns are resolved. Many of our questions about the content of a letter are answered when we decide that we are to follow a business letter format. At that point, we know to emphasize deference and respect, to suspend personal commentary and reference to issues other than those pertaining to the conduct of business.

The same is true for the adolescent who sets out to write a rap, a poem, or the table of contents for a magazine, or a record review. The formats for these written genres were found to be familiar to the adolescent in our research. They often read poems and heard raps. They regularly leafed through magazines and read, at least, those record reviews pertaining to their favorite music. More importantly, they accepted the worth of these particular formats.

In retrospect, we realized that we were directing teachers towards the instruction of various formats in our implementation - teaching about the social conventions and formal constraints to be observed in the manipulation of words in a graphic context. At first, we simply introduced formats from nonschool settings into the classroom. Discovering that most of our adolescent respondents had an insatiable appreciation for music and that many were already reading magazine and newspaper articles on their favorite musicians, we suggested that teachers use record reviews in their writing instruction. The format of the record reviews, which students clipped from their magazines and newspapers, were easily recognizable. Typically, they began with the names of the artist and the particular recording to be evaluated. This was followed by a series of value judgements and some background information about the artist. Reviews usually included recommendations to the reader about whether or not to purchase the recording under consideration. That students readily mastered the format of these reviews was evidenced by the fact that most all of their first attempts contained at least two, if not all three of these elements: (1)value judgements, (2) background information, and (3) recommendations. Subsequent attempts invariably included and elaborated on each of these dimensions. These later attempts also tended to be more rooted in the actual experiences of the students. In other words, as they wrote more reviews, they continued to adhere to the three-point format but included more of their own opinions and related their own experiences of having listened to the particular artist. In evaluating these reviews, teachers consistently commented on the improvements (very real, if slight) in spelling, grammar and syntax that followed from the review writing exercise.

This example suggests that, once writers are knowledgeable about the purpose and constraints which must be considered in writing, even the subtasks of composition will become less problematic. Such findings expand the options which might be taken to writing instruction. The greatest success in teaching writing at the pre-college level has been achieved through teaching writing in the first person. Research by Staton (1982) on dialogue journal writing is one of the most recent examples. The surprising and most characteristic of writing by Wordsworth students is their ability to write in other than first person under certain conditions. They showed the greatest capacity to do so when the following features were present:

- a familarity with the subject matter -- learners seemed capable of writing in any voice when they were allowed to rely on their own knowledge and interject their own judgement about the subject matter;
- a familiarity with the formats of expression -- instructing these students to express themselves in record reviews allowed them to present information in a format about which they had prior knowledge; and
- a familarity with the way in which language is used (the constraints on code) in any particular format, a knowledge of considerations about the formal/informal or standard/non-standard uses of English, for example.

Under ideal circumstances all three of these points are essential to writing. One cannot write without eventually having a knowledge of each. Our research suggests that the development of skills at one of these levels can facilitate the mastery of writing competence at other levels. Regularly we saw that students were lead to mastering the necessary skills at the level of syntax, if they understood the constraints of the particular format that they were working within.

SECTION TWO

I. Entering the Classroom

Wordsworth High School seemed particularly well suited for the research because of the willingness of its faculty to try new approaches, and to welcome researchers into their classrooms. The enthusiasm and active support of the principal also contributed significantly to the success of the research. Effort was focused on two of the five Wordsworth campuses. The Alpha campus was chosen because of the intention among faculty to concern themselves with the improvement of writing during the academic year. The Delta campus was chosen because the largest number of respondents from in the community were enrolled there.

Following presentations on the intended research to the faculties of the two units, two teachers on each campus agreed to involve themselves, and, together with the principal investigators, selected one of their classes for participation.

Alpha Campus Classes

"Facing Life Issues" is described in the Wordsworth catalogue as a comprehensive English course which teaches grammar and vocabulary development with a thematic approach to literacy genres. It consisted of twenty-five 11th and 12th graders, who were required to have completed a basic English course or obtained a recommendation from the teacher. The ethnic breakdown of the class was roughly one-third White and two-thirds Black, with one Hispanic. The teacher had completed all course work toward a Ph.D. in Folklore. Her insight and familiarity with the ethnographic approach provided a unique and unexpected point of view.

"Basic English" is described as a standard English course. The first part of the course was to be devoted to sentence structure and mechanics while the second term was to emphasize paragraph writing skills. Only twenty-five 9th and 10th grade students recommended by the staff of the English Department were eligible for this course. All of the students in this class, with the exception of one White and one Hispanic students, were Black. The teacher had taught in the Philadelphia public school system for over 20 years, and had been at Wordsworth since shortly after its inception.

Delta Campus Classes

"Civics" is described as a survey course of the function of city, state and federal government. It was designed to investigate the democratic process and compare other political, economic, and social systems. This class was classified as a basic-level course, and enrolled twenty 9th graders, all Black. Its instructor was the only Black teacher of the four participating in the research.

"A Study of Writing" was designed to work on writing skills through the study of drama, speech and poetry. It had no prerequisites. The class consisted of fifteen 11th and 12th graders, many of whom had already taken one course with the teacher. The class was comprised of roughly four-fifths Black and one-fifth White students. The teacher prided herself on having an open, personal relationship with her students, and her success at achieving such a relationship was immediately noticeable.

Ethnographic Findings Affecting Entry

The abbreviated first semester which resulted from the 50 day school strike generated a difficult atmosphere in which to enter the classroom. This served to exacerbate the already difficult task of gaining entree into the "new community" of the classroom. The classroom ethnographers found that they needed to create a role for themselves in an environment where only two roles had traditionally existed: students and teachers. It quickly became apparent that it was virtually impossible for many students and teachers to envision any role in the context of the classroom other than these traditional roles. Consequently, the classroom ethnographers were "placed" in one or the other of these roles by both students and teachers for extended periods of time, until their new, third-party role was accepted. The result was that almost the entire first semester was spent in gaining entree into the four classrooms. In their efforts to joint the class, ethnographers themselves sometimes assumed the role of teacher and sometimes that of student, in the latter case specifically by doing the homework assignments given by teachers. At other times, however, the third-party role -- where noninvolved observation was the primary goal -- was assumed.

As a result of this first twelve weeks of participant-observation in the classroom, it became clear that it would be impossible and impractical to implement instructional activities in identical ways in the four classrooms. To begin with, each of the teacher utilized a radically different pedagogical approach. While one teacher emphasized the acquisition of mechanical skills in grammar and punctuation, another refused to focus on these skills exclusively. While one teacher conducted her class in what might be described as a traditional fashion -- lecturing with all students sitting at individual desks and facing the front of the room -- another attempted to organize the diversity of her classroom by conducting several lessons simultaneusly, moving constantly from the front of the room to the tables where students were seated, each table working as a small group, independently of the other tables.

There were important differences in the characteristics of the two campuses and their dominant themes. these had to be considered in guiding the implementation of educational strategies. While Alpha was somewhat isolated from its surrounding community, Delta, significantly was not: it was common, for example, for the Head Teacher at Delta to patrol the local pizza shop and other commercial establishments periodically , and to insist that students attend their classes. The Head Teacher at Alpha, on the other hand, could accomplish the same end simply by walking downstairs from his office to the cafetaria where, on any given day, a significant number of students would be away from their classes. Delta there simply was no place for students to "hang out" inside of school.

Another factor affecting the different approaches taken at the two campuses was the relationship between the teachers participating in the research. The two teachers at Alpha had, prior to the research, established a collaborative relationship: they discussed the was tye research was conducted and their respective implementation of activities or pedagogical approaches on a daily basis. They had, in fact, even taught courses together prior to their involvement in the research. And, as has been mentioned, one of the Alpha teachers, a candidate for the Ph.D. in Folklore, had a unique perspective on the goals and methods of the research.

At Delta, no such relationship existed bewtween the two teachers, and as a result the research developed in an entirely different manner. The two teachers at Delta held significantly different views, particularly with regard to discipline. A conflict arose with regard to the relationship between the Head Teacher, recently appointed, and the other teachers at that campus. Probably in part because of her recent appointment, Delta's Head Teacher complained of a lack of support from other teachers for policies which she felt would improve the unit's operation.

All of these factors had asignificant impact upon the implementation phase of the research. While it was possible for the classroom ethnographers at Alpha to focus upon topically-oriented intervention strategies, at Delta relationships among students, teachers and the surrounding community were emphasized. Ironically, it was at the level of relationships that a significant impact on educational intervention was accomplished at both campuses.

Structured Informality

To say that Wordsworth is an "alternative school" in no way implies that it is a social environment lacking values, norms and patterned behavior. Certain aspects of social behavior in this environment were extremely regularized and predictable. In fact, the adapations made by students and teachers in order to adhere to their view of Wordsworth as an alternative school lead to predictable interactions. While teachers and students viewed Wordsworth as a school without the same constraints and "old fashioned, traditional rules" of other schools, they spent a significant amount of effort negotiating what rules they were to follow. These rules are organized in one manner or another, around seeking alternatives. Teachers systematically avoided what were regarded as standard educational practice.

An example of such predictable and structured communitas (Turner, 1975) is the norm that Wordsworth faculty saw students as relying on their own ability to discipline themselves; they felt that education should be cooperative and that teachers ought not dictate behavior or respond to undesirable behavior with anger or disciplinary force. This belief was regarded as an alternative way of education which placed primary responsibility on the student and lead to predictable sorts of student/teacher interaction. Teachers tended to use persuasion, but rarely threats of disciplinary action, to control student behavior. Teachers took great pains and expended large amounts of time in explaining how the behavior of particular students were disruptive, often detracting from other work, but they had recourse to disciplinary force only as a last resort. At times it appeared almost as if patience and nurturing were part of curriculum. Many students interpreted this as license for behaving freely as they chose to at any time. They realized that misbehavior in class, tardiness or incomplete assignments would not result in immediate or severe actions on behalf of teachers. Often they took full advantage of this freedom, testing a teacher's limits, until they saw that she was suffering as a result of their actions. Other students appeared to discipline themselves and demonstrate remarkable courtesy under these constrainsts. Accompanying this theme of non-forceful discipline was an ongoing discussion among teachers about the extent to which problem students should be punished or reprimanded.

II. Collaboration Between Ethnographers and Practitioners

A major goal of the research was the establishment of a truly collaborative relationship between teachers and researchers. As the research developed, such collaboration emerged as a major underlying theme which guided the entire intervention. From the outset, researchers presented themselves not as experts but as resources. This was particularly important at the Alpha campus at the Wordsworth School, where teachers tended to be much more aware of their individual students' lives beyond the classroom than originally expected. The involvement of Wordsworth teachers in the personal affairs of their students was exemplified, for example, in the remark of one of the students who addressed the school's graduting seniors. At Wordsworth, he said, "our teachers are our friends."

Tt was difficult at first to provide teachers with information regarding their students of which they were not already cognizant. However, it soon became apparent that though teachers were aware of a substantial part of the personal history of their students, much of what they knew was learned on the limited basis of extended conversations with their students. What the ethnographers had to offer was observation and interpretation of students' behavior in a number of community settings, from the point of view of the participant-observer. Cultural description focusing on group norms and behavior, rather than cognitive or individual-focused description, guided practitioner/research dialogue. As a result, whereas researchers at first felt unable to contribute significantly to pedagogical strategy (it appeared that teachers had already attempted to implement virtually all of the logical approaches that were derived from research outside the school), it soon became apparent that the alternative view of ethnographers regarding the lives of students did in fact provide teachers with a new perspective.

Nowhere was this better illustrated than around the discussion of "rapping" as a literacy-related activity. Teachers, for example, were aware of the prevalence of rapping in the lives of their students, but they were surprised to learn that it generated a significant amount of writing among adolescents. This knowledge helped to dissipate resistance among teachers to the use of the genre in the classroom.

Collaboration assumed other forms, however. One important manifestation of the collaborative relationship from the point of view of the teacher was the team-teaching approach which emerged during the implementation phase of the research. At times, the researchers conducted lectures, assisted in answering the questions of individual students, and even taught the class on the few occasions when teachers were absent. It was pointed out by teachers on more than one occasion, that the mere presence of another adult who demonstrated a genuine interest in classroom proceedings was appreciated. It was said that "teaching is a lonely enterprise. There are no adults around to see what you do." The presence of the researcher was therefore, welcomed.

Finally, the success of the project in establishing a collaborative relationship between practitioners and researchers was best exemplified by the inclusion of one of the teachers in the presentation of the research at various professional and academic conferences, and in the production of this report. This level of involvement was facilitated by the teacher's academic preparation, and served to demonstrate the extent to which true collaboration was valued.

It would be naive for us to assume that collaboration among practitioners and ethnographers will always occur in the same manner, when important contextual variables differ. By allowing for a significant amount of flexibility in our implementation and by regularly observing in classrooms where our approach was not implemented, we were able to determine from an objective point of view what actually occurred and why. We noticed that certain resources needed to exist in the classroom and that certain social characteristics of the school were more or less conducive to our collaborative educational approach. Among the resources and social characteristics which fostered collaboration were:

- The assignment of responsibility among teachers in a collaborative relationship needed to be clearly defined and regularly evaluated.
- Members of a collaborating team needed to feel as though they were working toward shared goals with shared rewards.
- Teachers needed to share an ideology of teaching or possess complimentary views on the goals and methods of teaching.
- Natural alliances were most dependable and collaboration between teachers needed to be sustained by various factors, such as the scheduling of time designated exclusively for collaboration.

III. From Community Ethnography to Educational Strategy

Having gained a partial and ever-increasing knowledge of writing as it occurred in nonschool settings of our North Philadelphia field site. we sought to apply that knowledge to the implementation of instructional approaches in the classroom. Information about the forms, functions and values associated with writing among the members of our respondent group were integrated by means of our collaboration with school personnel to answer the following questions:

- What are the differences between students' and teachers' standards and expectations toward writing? What constructive roles and statuses attributed to writers in the nonschool setting can be integrated into instructional activities?
- What are the differences between writing events in the classroom and in the community? Does writing in the nonschool setting carry a value, serve a function or take generic form that is not understood by the teacher?
- How can students be encouraged or permitted to rely on their own experiences, organization and expressive abilities, and to use writing for their own purposes as well as those of the teacher?
- How can cultural diversity be integrated into classroom writing activity?
    - What are the genres and functions of writing most commonly recognized by those particular students?
    - How can knowledge regarding different modes of communication (including, for example, oral traditional narrative) in nonschool settings be used to help practitioners to understand cultural differences reflected in their students' writing to guide them in developing their own composing/writing processes?

We believed that our attempts to answer such questions in collaboration with students and practitioners would produce concrete writing activities which insured that students approached writing with increased enthusiam and persistence, while the quantity and quality of their writing was augmented

The Differences Between School and NonSchool Settings

It would be naive to suggest that a clear cut boundary existed between the school and community or that the behavior and concerns of adolescents are significantly different when they were in class than when they were at home or on the street. The youths that were the subject of our study looked to school time as an opportunity for conducting all sorts of activities that were not part of the official boundaries of educational objectives. School was a time for these kids to make friends, joke and play, to plan their weekends, to flirt and gossip, to fight and argue, to exchange or take drugs, to organize around political or moral issues, to avoid familial difficulties or the boredom of their neighborhoods and homes. School was viewed as a refuge just as often as it was regarded to be a restricting environment. It was just as likely to be regarded as a place of frivolity as it was a place for discipline.

Teachers were well aware of this. They knew about the styles of music and sport and clothing. They knew about the romantic relationships and the family problems of their students. When one student was jilted by another, teachers were among the first to know. Teachers were often acquainted with the parents of their students. Teachers furthermore were often deeply involved in the solution of problems affecting their students and, in fact, felt that a central component of effective teaching was to be available as a confidant and advisor for troubled students. Teachers also knew something of unofficial writing if not its functions. They were aware of slam books and that some writing of raps occurred. This raised important questions about the uses of ethnography in educational research and asked what an ethnography of school and community can do to enhance educational intervention.

While much school and community behavior of adolescents were similar, this does not mean that teachers immediately knew and understood this behavior. The school is, after all, a very different context than the community. The behavior and concerns of adolescents was not always interpreted appropriately by the teacher, whose activity was confined to the school setting, and it became the role of the ethnographer to bridge that interpretation gap between school and community settings. Briefly, the role of the ethnographer became one of providing relevant information about behavior so that it was understandable in various contexts.

- While teachers may be exposed to the music, fashions, and sports in which their students are involved, they generally know only about the behavioral artifacts of these involvements. They do not necessarily know in what way that artifact is significant for their students. Most importantly, they do not know what is current for their students. Teachers were aware that their students liked rap music, but they did not necessarily know about its relative importance, or about it centrality to recreation, or about the values that it expressed and sustained in adolescent subculture. Because they knew about rap but were ignorant about its place in everyday life, teachers were often disinterested in rap. They could not see its pedagogical value because they knew little about the contexts in which it was produced and performed.

- Teachers were not necessarily knowledgeable about how things got done in nonschool settings and how things fit together. They did not know that a significant amount of reading accompanied the love of sports or fashion. They did not know that the creation of a rap often involved collaboration and support within groups of peers.

- Teachers, influenced by their academic training, were guided towards psychological (individualistic) interpretations, rather than the cultural interpretations which ethnographers are trained to provide. One student, for example, was diagnosed as "learning disabled" by one of the teachers because he often displayed what the ethnographers interperted as humorously disruptive and demonstrative behavior in reaction to his peers. Additionally, in setting goals and evaluating student performance, teachers were trained to emphasize cognitive skills and weaknesses, which often had little bearing on individual ability to negotiate the circumstances of daily life.

Clearly, one role of the school ethnographer was to facilitate learning by removing the perceived boundary between school and community settings and thereby providing alternative or more holistic interpretations of student behavior.

The aptness of metaphor is related to cultural, ethnic and class background. Foreign language students, for example, continue to struggle with the comprehension of metaphor in an unfamiliar language long after achieving fluency. A similar metaphoric inaccessibility exists between students and teachers with regard to the other's language. We know, for example, that language change may originate in culturally marginal segments of a society, and gradually works its way into the dominant culture (Wolfran, 1972). Hence, many metaphors begin as inaccessible to the dominant culture. As illustrated in this report, the use of the word "rap" in varying forms originated in the Black community. In the 1960's the term "rap sessions" became a part of the verbal repertoire of the dominant culture. In that usage, however, much of the contextual basis for the use of the term in the Black English was lost. Similarly, students can be unaware of the contextual basis for the metaphoric use of various lexical items in Standard English. It was shown in our research that ethnographers can assist both students and teachers by translating across the boundaries of age, sex, role and ethnicity to facilitate communication and enhance learning.

Rationale for the Implementation Plan

Based on the findings of school and community ethnography, it was imperative that the central theme of our approach to implementation be the incorporation of cultural diversity. Our observation of the classroom convinced us of the importance of considering both the competencies of individual students and the goals of each teacher. Furthermore, we noted the extent to which teachers valued academic freedom, e.g., the opportunity to develop individual teaching styles and curricula. Additionally, any two classes comprised of students of the same grade-level were widely disparate in terms of the level of student proficiency. Any attempt to implement identical activities in each classroom would, therefore, have been inappropriate. Instead, it was our hope to develop activities which were appropriate to each classroom, based upon collaboration with individual teachers. However, we approached each classroom with a set of common goals and techniques because we felt that common themes and problems were likely to emerge in all the classrooms in which we intervened.

In sum, the implementaton plan was guided by a cluster of findings originating in our community and classroom investigation:

(1). Students are capable of and motivated towards accomplishing literacy-related activities which they judge to be purposeful, relevant or "not boring." Instructional activities in the classroom could benefit from specific input by students about what activities might possess these qualities.

(2). Practitioners are knowledgeable about the personal lives of their students and most capable of establishing effective communication with them. Practitioners can benefit from alternative intepretations (e.g. cultural as opposed to individual interpretations) of the information and relationships they have with respect to their students.

(3) Students and teachers possess a broad range of complimentary competencies which, when brought to bear on educational activities in the appropriate contexts, can insure that students will approach writing with increased enthusiasm and persistance, which will affect the quantity and quality of the writing.

(4) Students and teachers can benefit from the input of an ethnographer, acting as a broker of information across cultural contexts. The ethnographer can play an important role in the classroom by helping to articulate the particular skills, communicative roles, and motivations of students, as well as teachers. The ethnographer can also be instrumental in the classroom by helping to provide alternate interpretations of teacher/student interaction

and by structuring culturally appropriate contexts in which learning can take place.

The development of specific activities in this implementation were guided by the following assumptions:

- *Neither writing nor speaking necessarily takes precedence over the other*. In particular contexts and for particular purposes, one mode may be most appropriate for effective communication. Whenever possible, instructional approaches should be developed to incorporate both modes of communication.
- *Productive competence must be developed in conjunction with the acquisition of particular syntactic* and semantic skills. Instructional activities should be developed which encourage students to produce more written (and spoken) communications. Poductive competence is most closely linked with communication as it occurs in real life situations. As students develop a sense of purposefulness in their communication -- a product simply of their using language for what is important to them -- they and their teachers will identify the specific syntactic semantic skills which are lacking.

Our research demonstrated that merely *transplanting* literacy-related activities from the community into the school was not feasible. The classroom was shown to be separate and unlike the community, and the boundaries between the community and the school required close scrutiny. Once more, we discovered quite soon that developing entree into the school demanded that we establish new relationships with school personnel and a role for ourselves as researchers. Over the period of our implementation, we came to think of our task as one of translation and distillation. The incorporation of nonschool literacyactivities into the classroom appeared to require that we isolate the important elements of content and context so that they could be conducted with appropriateness, while the purposes and enthusiasm with which they were originally conducted is maintained. In order to accomplish this, we intended to incorporate activities from the community into the classroom using two approaches:

Analogous Implementation, where the indigenous activity was brought into the classroom in its original form to whatever extent possible. The context which originally framed the activity would be recreated to the degree possible. Conversely, we sought also to encourage activities outside the classroom, so that the original motivations and constraints which fostered writing in the community could be maintained.

Topical Implementation, where the indigenous activity became the central theme of instruction and the original enthusiasm of the student for the activity was tapped, but the activity itself was not replicated in the classroom setting. Here, students were asked to think critically about one aspect of their lives and to develop expressive skills which would allow them to describe and explain its significance.

Derivation of Instructional Approaches

Due to the recursive nature of ethnography applied to the educational enterprise, it would have been inappropriate to present a list of activities for formulaic implementation in the classroom. The needs and competencies of those who people the classroom are varied to the extent that a standard protocol of instructional activities would be ineffectual. The strength of ethnography is, afterall, its sensitivity to the details of context as they influence interaction. Therefore, while it is important that we understand literacy events in the community and attempt to isolate the important elements of such events as they are relevant to the classroom instruction of writing, something more is needed. The classroom must be regarded as a unique social arena in its own right. Literacy events in the community are best treated as a source of information which will shape our collaboration with teachers and students. They provide the basis for a dialogue involving teachers and students which will yield instructional approaches which are contextually appropriate and effective. It is, therefore, necessary to identify the sources of information which will fuel the dialogue. Instructional approaches were developed from the following sources:

- Responses of students and teachers to community ethnography. We presented our research findings and the resultant questions to each, providing ample time for discussion with students and teachers. The response of each group resulted in further questions and the need for clarification. Out of our discussions writing activities emerged. Students were asked, for example, to provide additional detail or more accurate information on any aspect of the community which we presented in our discussions. The processes of investigating their own community and correcting the inevitable misconceptions which our ethnography generated, provided ample motivation and topical orientation for writing activities.

- Comparison of student and teacher appraisal of written texts. Once we had initiated a writing activity, it was possible to interview both students and teachers about (1) their opinions of the exercise and (2) their judgements about the effectiveness of written communication in the products of those exercises. Students and teachers were in partial disagreement about what semantic devices made for effective communication. Syntactic issues were also dealt with as students and teachers examined and evaluated specific texts. The end product of this examination and evaluation of texts was a lomd pf learning that was relevant to literacy.

- Identification of specific skills relevant to literacy, from both traditional and nontraditional sources. In the analysis of artifacts of nondirected writing we noted that students used many of the devices which teachers attempted to teach in the classroom. Students applied techniques from the classroom to their personally motivated writing and, conversely, they utilized techniques from noninstitutional sources in all of their writing. For example, students applied much of what they learned from the lyrics of popular music to their writing. The identification of these alternate sources of skills which were useful in writing informed the teaching process and increased the continuity between the school and nonschool experiences of students.

- Teacher and student-generated activities. Our research revealed that both students and teachers had their own agenda for the classroom. At times these agenda varied, but they could not be considered antithetical in all cases. By initiating classroom dialogue about discrepancies in what teachers and students hoped to accomplish in the classroom, we were able to guide teachers toward more effective instructional approaches.

- Problem-solving in the successful execution of instructional approaches. In interviews with teachers, we learned that many of the instructional activities which seemed appropriate from the perspective of the community had already been tried, but with only partial success. Our classroom ethnography suggested that, while the original attempt to bring indigenous activities into the classroom was justified, other interventions were needed to accompany this approach. Certain structural constraints of the school and interactional dimensions of student-teacher relations strongly influenced the outcome of these attempts. The ethnographers on this project were useful to teachers as problem-solvers on such occasions by providing alternate interpretations of instructional outcomes and by brokering relationships between the school and community, as well as between students and teachers.

- Responses to spontaneously arising events and opportunities. Since the school and community were treated as vital social domains of inherent interest to students, we concluded that students would be motivated to examine these domains in their writing. As events occurred in those domains which the school ethnography demonstrated were of interest to students, these events became the object of classroom discussion. These discussions inevitably led to writing activities which actively engaged students.

These instructional approaches were to be implemented over a single semester in three phases, each of approximately four weeks duration. Each phase was to have a general topical heading. The specificity of the phases was expected to increase as we collaborated with students and teachers and began to isolate the literacy-relevant aspects of each topic. The topical headings of each phase were as follows:

Phase I: Music and its Relationship to Writing
Phase II: Fashion and Sports as Related to Reading and Writing
Phase III: The Importance of Writing in Work

Each phase was to begin with class discussions, where the ethnographers would share their findings in the community and invite comment from students. As students expressed their attitudes and beliefs about these topics, researchers and teachers were to collaborate to develop potential writing activities which would then be assigned to students. The third week of each phase would be reflexive, where students and teachers were asked to comment on the appropriateness and value of each activity in face-to-face interviews. Finally, in the last week of each phase, a second writing activity was to be initiated. At each point in the implementation where a writing activity was assigned, the activity would be observed and described ethnographically and the written products collected for appraisal by the researcher/practitioner team.

Management of Involvement

Many of the actions taken by teachers and members of the research staff in the execution of the implementation plan might best be described as the management of involvement. We found, for example, that exploring the topics of music, sports and fashion in class increased student participation, but that such participation needed to be met with appropriate responses from teachers (e.g., guide questions, useful criticism, and assignments which provide formats for organizing student input). We also noticed that, if teachers were not successful at establishing the proper balance of authority and comradery in their relationship with the class, the investment of students in any instructional activity was diminished. We discovered, further, that any implementation plan contended with institutional factors, such as the scheduling of all-school events or absenteeism among students and teachers, which hindered the consistent and systematic implementation of a plan. Finally, it was clear that the understanding and interest achieved through any educational intervention varied markedly from day to day, from class to class, and student to student. All this is to state simply that a multitude of factors, in addition to subject matter and assignment, determined the outcome of any particular educational intervention, and the successful teacher was one who managed student involvement by relying on his or her understanding of these many factors.

In this research, we acquired important information which allowed us to implement our plan in a way which was most appropriate to the needs of students and teachers. This arose as we did what was necessary to establish a collaborative relationship with teachers and students. We added students to the list of those with whom we should collaborate because they openly demanded a role in the planning of our implementation. Students made very specific and often surprising demands:

- that they be able to investigate topics more thoroughly or that they be allowed to investigate a broader number of topics, and
- that they be given input on their use of standard English, e.g., through the diagramming of sentences.

In order to insure student involvement, we incorporated these demands into our implementation.

We also sought to develop methods of managing the involvement of teachers, where they maintaind their authority and autonomy in the classroom. In the first phase of the implementation, our finding was that we (as ethnographers and resources) and our plan (as a guide/supplement to ongoing classroom activities) were involved in instruction in ways that we had not anticipated. The pattern was that we and our plan were either the central focus of classroom activity -- to which teacher deferred almost completely -- or we and our plan were not incorporated into classroom activity at all in which case the teacher resumed her traditional strategy of teaching. In spite of this, our plan was undoubtedly well received by teachers. A coordinated complimentarity between our plan, teachers and ourselves had not been consistently achieved. Dealing with this situation in a recursive manner strengthened our implementation -- as it provided teachers with a unique opportunity to specify their goals in the classroom with another professional and provided us with the opportunity to negotiate our role and function as researchers in the classroom.

Implementation of Instructional Approaches

Despite the proposed implementation plan, the actual implementation of instructional approaches assumed a structure of its own. While the proposed plan followed a topical approach, the implementation focused upon a change in the dynamics of the classroom, with an emphasis on the relationship between teachers and researchers, between teachers and students, as well as among students. This was partly due to the fact that the ethnographic approach focused on the relational aspects of school as opposed to those aspects of learning pertaining to the acquisition of cognitive skills. However, it was also true that we were able to monitor and record behavioral changes, although we were less able to manipulate them.

In the initial phase, ethnographers assumed an active, aggressive role in the creation of writing activities, and their implementation in the classroom. The second phase was characterized by less direct involvement on the part of ethnographers. Teachers were encouraged to take a more active role, and ethnographers presented themselves not as experts, but as resources. During the third and final phase of implementation, teachers began to relinquish to students, some of the responsibility for the learning taking place in their classrooms. Students became more vocal about the topics and the nature of assignments and, in one classroom, even exercised "veto privileges" over the final major project. The result of this recursiveness was that activities were approached more enthusiastically and tasks were more thoroughly completed. In the end, teachers acknowledged that all of their original pedagogical objectives had been met.

The initial phase of implementation contributed to the recursiveness of the research. Through the observation and description of the phenomenon of rapping, we identified collaboration among peers as a significant component of the writing process. After sharing this information with teachers, we noted an increased willingness on their part to encourage peer collaboration and co-editing of written work. Additionally, students requested more freedom in the choice of topics for classroom discussion and writing activities. This information guided the remaining phases of the implementation.

During the second phase, collaboration among students, which had been identified a key element during the first phase, was emphasized. While we had originally intended to concentrate on sports and fashion, we found that some students were more interested in a variety of other topics, including poetry, computers, health and beauty. Students were encouraged to work in groups, and only a few students opted for pursing individual projects. One group of students wrote and directed a play which they performed in the classroom. Teachers expressed amazement at the amount of out-of-class work that went into these writing projects. Several students who had displayed minimal interest and involvement prior to the implementation period, and even during the initial phase, ethusiastically applied themselves to this task. One teacher even indicated that a particular student would receive a passing grade for the course almost exclusively on the basis of the quality of this project. (The student had been failing the course up to that point.)

The final phase of implementation, although the shortest in duration, was perhaps the most significant. It was during this final phase that stu dents began to comment on their perceptions of change in their teachers' pedagogical approaches. While collaboration among peers had been identified as a key element in the first phase and had guided the direction of the second phase, the empowerment of students was identified as a key element in the second phase and formed the basis of our approach in the final phase. In the third phase, then, it was the students who created the final, major project. We had planned that the last phase would help prepare students for the transition from school to work. The students themselves suggested that we should create a business and market a product, as a means of exploring some of the issues involved in operating a business, and investigating the infrastructure of a company. Interestingly, they decided upon the approach to teaching writing which they, their teachers and the researchers had developed. The final three weeks of classes were therefore, devoted to describing and discussing (in writing as well as verbally), what we had done during the past summer. Finally, a strategy was devised for marketing this new program to other educators. Probably the most significant result of this activity, however, was the title chosen by the students to describe the writing program: "A Writing of Our Own."

During the three phases of implementation then, classroom instructions evolved from a teacher-centered approach to one designed to empower students while effectively accomplishing the goals of teachers. The focus of the teacher evolved from an emphasis on the products of classroom writing assignments to an emphasis on the process of production. By the end of the school year, teachers had begun to share with students a responsibility for their learning, and students had progressed for the production of compelled writing to the creation of impelled (self-initiated) written communication.

Classroom Writing Activities

During the first phase of implementation, music was the focus of classroom activities. We began by capitalizing upon students' knowledge of and interest in various forms of contemporary music. Discussion of this topic was initiated by a listening session in the classroom, focusing on the latest rap music. A rather heated debate ensued over the relative merits of rap music. Students were then shown copies of recorded reviews from popular magazines and local newspapers. They were then asked to write reviews of the records of their choice, following the models provided. Students were also asked to complete a major project -- a "personal" music booklet in which they could represent their musical interests in a variety of ways. They were encouraged to categorize their favorite "top ten" songs, write concert and record reviews, create biographies of their favorite artists, display and caption their collection of concert ticket stubs, copy their favorite song lyrics, and analyze the art on album covers.

Through these activities, students were encouraged to express musical preference, critical appreciation and enthusiasm in a variety of ways which permitted them to capitalize on their individual communication skills. Although each student was responsible for his or her own booklet, much discussion ensued during class time which was alloted for writing. This interchange served to facilitate the formulation and refinement of written expression. Students borrowed ideas as well as words and phrases for each other, and even solicited advice on grammatical construction, spelling and punctuation.

While sports and fashion were the originally intended focus of the second phrase, students requested an opportunity to investigate a broader range of topics. They were asked to work in small groups to produce a "magazine" on a topic of their choice. Since we had discovered that magazines were intensely popular reading material among them, we asked students to study the format of their favorite magazines and to reproduce that format, focusing on a single theme or on several related themes. To complete this assignment, students were required to conduct research in order to generate material for their magazine. Their investigation took the form of library research of primary (e.g., newspapers) and secondary sources, (how-to-manuals); as well as interviews and opinion surveys. (Both the teachers and researchers were included as subjects in many of these surveys.)

Writing in the magazines took the form of documentation and the interpretation ofsurvey results, descriptive how-to accounts, the listing of athletic teams' averages, ratings and standings, the writing of biographies of sports personalities, and explaining and describing the nature of disorders associated with the eating habits of adolescents. Magazine articles were often accompanied by captioned illustrations.

Students regularly wrote rough drafts which were revised with the assistance of teachers and researchers as well as their peers. The desire to present a "perfect" finished product that appealed to and impressed their peers motivated students to strive for grammatically and syntactically correct prose. Rough drafts were shared with group members before the production of the final draft for the purpose of soliciting advice and suggestions, which were then incorporated into the revised version.

The final phase incorporated all of the findings produced by the recursive process of the preceeding phases. Students created a company whose product would be a writing program utilizing the instructional approach of their class. Their task was to market this program to fictional educators. Students developed a "before and after" model for any advertising campaign, using slogans and written testimonials. Photographic advertising was also considered as a possible marketing tool. Although the school year ended before this project could be completed, once again the teacher's pedagogical goals were met. Teachers described this period as the most productive with respect to the quality of writing produced by students.

The interplay of theme, classroom structure, and learning objectives in each classroom activity resulted in a gradual shift in classroom orientation from a teacher-directed to a collegial instructional process, from solitary composition to collaboration around writing tasks, and from abstract discussion of decontextualized subjects to a concrete description or narration about known subjects. By allowing adolescent culture to inform and inspire writing in the classroom, both in its shape and its content, a meaningful function was assigned to classroom writing. Further, by creating an audience in both the revision phase of composition and in the final sharing of booklets and magazines, a performance-like context was created for the text. Through legitimating a variety of literacy-related competencies within the classroom, an atmosphere of acceptance and validation for students abilities was created, leading to their self-motivated expansion and the refinement of their writing skills.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

I may, I might, I must

If you can tell me why
   the fen appears impassable, I then

will tell you why I think that I can
get across it, if I try

From: To Be a Dragon
Viking Press, 1959

Our implementation of educational strategy evolved from a topical, product oriented emphasis, to a focus on the process of composition and on the relational aspects of the classroom. It seemed only logical, therefore, that in assessing the effectiveness of our intervention, we should move from traditional, systematic criteria to a more naturalistic approach. We recognized almost immediately that ethnographically relevant data during the course of our implementation would frequently emerge. Although much of this information would not have been generated by a traditional evaluation design, it was central to our understanding of the impact of the implementation on both students and teachers.

In addition to information gathered through participant observation, the primary tool of this evaluation was the "oral-grading exercise." In this exercise, the teacher was asked to "grade" student papers in the presence of the researcher, who observed her evaluative reaction to the written product. No direction was provided by the researcher regarding evaluative criteria. In the early assignments, prior to implementation, teachers appeared to be primarily concerned with the syntax and aesthetic criteria, including "neatness," "grammar," "punctuation," "spelling," and the "organization of paragraphs." They also commented frequently on the register and style, including the use of colloquialisms ("conversational language") and on format (e.g., "mixing letter-writing form with that of a composition").

In the oral-grading exercises conducted on assignments given during the implementation period, teachers maintained many of the concerns they had expressed earlier. However, comments on content, overall structure and effectiveness of expression were more frequent. Teachers indicated that assignments completed during the implementation period appeared "easier for students to relate to." This they believed to result in more thoroughly developed themes and greater confidence in the tone of writing among students. Discernable improvement in organization, spelling and syntax was seen as a natural by-product of the student's increased interest in completing the assignments. Particular emphasis was placed on increased length of assignments and major projects, and a perception of slow but steady improvement in the quality of writing for a number of students. This was particularly gratifying for teachers, since they indicated that "you don't usually see steady improvement with kids on this level."

The oral-grading exercise then was useful in assessing the impact of our intervention on the teacher's pedagogical goals as well as on the quality of the products of classroom writing activities. From this activity, it became evident that there was a shift in the teacher's focus in the classroom from concern with improvement of student's writing on the syntactical level, to emphasis on the association between expression and content (i.e., whether content is selected so as to provide the desired effect on the reader), understanding of format (i.e., characteristics of record reviews, magazines, compositions, plays, outlines, etc.), and recognition of where flexibility is appropriate (e.g., topic sentence and conclusion of a composition).

The acquisition of literacy can be equated with the acquisition and demonstration of other linguistic capabilities, such as speaking. Consequently, much of the recent research on literacy has been influenced by the field of linguistics. Since the focus of our research was on the teaching and learning of literacy related skills, it seemed only logical that some insight might be gained from the field of language teaching, which has experienced significant progress as a result of the application of linguistic theory. The objectivity of linguistic description provided the kind of perspective which allowed the research team to broaden its focus from the surface level of morphology and syntax (expression) to include the level of deep structure (content), as well as the means of getting from deep to surface structure (association).

The assignments and projects submitted to teachers by students during the implementation period contained numerous examples of copied text. These unseasoned writers proceeded slowly, started and stopped unnecessarily, and produced numerous errors. Copying provided students of writing with a model for replication, exercise (since writing involves motor skills), and reinforcement. Each new learning experience seemed to leave only a trace in the individual's memory, and practice allowed them to incorporate that experience into their repertiore of demonstrable skills. Copying, however, is usually monotonous and discourages persistence. Fortunately, we were able to overcome the ennui associated with this task, through the motivational strategies outlined above (See above "From Community Ethnography to Classroom Strategy.") This is particularly significant in light of the fact that the most frequent comment we heard from students was that "school is boring."

That students had more to say on the topics introduced during the implementation period than those assigned in classroom writing prior to [illegible] research was evidenced by an increase in the length of their writ[illegible] products. In addition, the interactional atmosphere at Wordsworth discouraged sanctions against incomplete homework assignments. This was reflected by the frequency with which students were allowed class time to complete activities which had been assigned for homework. However, completion of the major projects assigned during the implementation period required that a considerable amount of research and writing be done outside of class. Nevertheless, virtually all of the students completed their projects and submitted them on time. One student, who had been failing the course due to a lack of involvement, received a passing grade on the basis of his diligence in the completion of a major project. Another student, who was characterized by the teacher as one who "usually writes only a couple of sentences when you ask him for a page," submitted a twenty-page booklet during the second phase of implementation (See Artifact #1, Appendix III.)

One statement that could be made about students prior to our intervention, was that they were opinionated. They were therefore fairly adept at expressing a point of view. However, their writing frequently lacked focus and organization. This was due, at least in part, to their submission of assignments without the benefit of revision. We discovered in fact that the concept of revision was totally foreign to most of these students. Through the process of collaboration, however, students themselves began to learn to use and see the value of revision. Instead of submitting a series of disconnected thoughts strung together in paragraph form, students capitalized on the involvement of their peers to refine their written products. (See Artifacts #2 and 3, Appendix III.)

A significant result of the discussion of genres of music conducted in the initial phase of implementation was that it provided students with an understanding of the importance of format. (A detailed discussion of format appears in Section I of this report). It also demonstrated the facility with which students were able to adapt to the conventions of format. Students were able, for example, to write record and concert reviews resembling those found in trade magazines and newspapers, after having spent only one class period on the topic. Their skill was exhibited further in the booklets they submitted in magazine format, in fulfillment of the requirements of the second phase of implementation.

Effectiveness in writing is dependent upon order of presentation, emphasis, point of view, and style. It is more difficult to assess than the other components of written communication. While it would be difficult to show a distinguishable improvement in the effectiveness of students' writing after only twelve weeks, we can say that teachers perceived some measure of improvement in the effectiveness of student writing. Most importantly, however, was the perception of students that they felt more at ease with pen in hand, that they felt more responsible for their own learning, and, in the words of one teacher, "that good writing is in their grasp." (See Artifact #4, Appendix III.)

Finally, there were several other factors which reflected the success of our intervention. We found, for example, that attendance was higher in the classes included in the research than in other classes at Wordsworth. In fact, there were several occasions when students, who were not enrolled in one of these classes, requested permission to attend. Two of the teachers received complaints from students not involved in the research that they felt slighted. In response to those complaints, one of the teachers independently implemented our approach.

Much of what is significant in drawing conclusions from this research was evident in the first phase of our intervention in the classroom, when music was introduced as part of the writing curriculum. The ethnographic team had previously recognized that music was highly valued by the adolescents involved in the research. It was central to much of their activity outside of school and was often accompanied by various literacy events. These youth were seen reading record jackets, fan magazines, and music reviews. They were observed writing musical lyrics with diligence and enthusiasm. Writing associated with "rap" music - a popular genre during the research period - was found to be practiced by a great many of these youth. In their musical interests, as in other activities they possessed their own purpose for writing.

The musical interests of these youth and its associated writing were not necessarily appreciated in the classroom. Prior to our intervention, students assumed that "their music" was forbidden in instructional periods of the school day. Teachers similarly, often viewed the popular music of their students to be disruptive in school. If they did not regard music as a distraction from learning, they saw it as innocuous - neither hampering nor helping in the acquisition of literacy skills. The intervention accomplished in this project began when researchers provided ethnographic data demonstrating that writing tied to music was similar in process and product to the writing teachers wanted to foster in the classroom. In their unofficial writing associated with music, these youth demonstrated rhetorical goals and methods, concern with vocabulary, the ability to go to other written sources for models and additions, a desire to collaborate with other writers, and a willingness to edit and recompose their written texts. All of these were regarded as valuable to writing instruction by the teachers involved in our research.

Once teachers were convinced of the possible contribution of this unofficial writing to pedagogy, music was introduced into the curriculum. At this point, a social process took place which had a farreaching impact on teaching and learning in the classroom. Teachers were challenged to keep up with the varied and powerful responses which this approach elicited from students. The researchers, who were now making regular observations in the classroom, established roles as mediators between students and teachers by providing clarification and alternative intepretations of classroom events.

The most notable result of this intervention was an increase in talking and writing about the topic proposed by the teacher. Initially, the proposed topic was popular music and its associated writing - a topic in which students were known to possess an interest and particular expertise. When given an opportunity to discuss a familiar subject, teachers noted that students talked more than in earlier class meetings. Students began to state their musical preferences and offered to bring samples of their favorite music to class. As they expressed their likes and dislikes, very emotional discussions arose. Students talked directly to one another with a frankness that sometime startled their teachers. In written assignments on music, teachers identified the following changes: increased length and neatness, longer periods of uninterrupted concentration on writing, greater committment of nonschool time to these assignments, and more frequent reliance on peers, the teacher, or other written texts as sources of input for writing.

Focus on music also changed the social structure in the classroom. Teachers who now showed an interest in the nonschool activities of their students were regarded with affection, trust and respect. As students began to talk more directly with one another, they relied less on the teacher as the sole audience for their opinions. Alliances formed in which students helped one another develop cogent arguments about their preferences for a particular type of music. As these alliances formed, students began to rely on each other throughout the composition process. This meant that the teacher had greater freedom to facilitate learning for the class as a whole.

Because the teacher was spending less of her time disciplining students and because she was aided in the appraisal of writing by other students, she now had the opportunity to guide students to various resources and decisions which allowed them to improve their own writing.

Also as a result of this intervention, the boundary between school and community became less distinguishable. Students brought music and publications to class which they had previously left at home. During classroom writing assignments, they interacted with one another very much as they did in their peer groups or families outside of school. They began to choose topics from among those issues of concern to their peers and family members. Students demonstrated a sense of ownership for their writing. Ultimately they referred to the intervention by the title "A Writing of Our Own."

In spite of the relevance and ownership which characterized the writing done as the result of our intervention, a concern for acquiring fundamental skills was maintained. Teachers commented that this strategy of instruction allowed them to readily identify and correct the syntactic errors of their students. The use of standard sources of information, such as dictionaries and libraries increased during this period. Many students were equally as concerned about basic language skills as teachers. After several class sessions had been devoted to music, one student even asked to spend some class time on the study of verb conjugation. It seemed that once students were able to establish ownership and to rely on their prior knowledge about writing, they were more willing to accept the direction of the teacher in acquiring fundamental language skills.

The conclusion to be drawn from the ethnography (which demonstrated that these youth will write even when they are not obligated to do so) and of the classroom intervention (which demonstrated that their willingness to write can be positively influenced) is that these students were not rejecting writing, but something else. It suggests that they were hindered in their writing by the social structure of the classroom. Prior to our intervention, classroom activities were proposed and directed by the teacher. Students complied with the teacher's direction and focused their efforts on meeting her demands exclusively or not at all. During our intervention, students began to propose their own direction for classroom activities and to rely on their peers as an audience for their writing. The social structure of the classroom changed from one which was hierarchically organized under the authority of the teacher to one in which responsibility for developing and completing written assignments was shared by both students and teachers. In this restructured social system, the leadership of the teacher was not undermined because she was recognized as the most skill writer in the classroom and because students were generally loyal to her and dependent on her for accomplishing a shared goal--learning to write.

This research has demonstrated that writing competence is more than a set of language skills. It is also the set of social relationships that allow one to express what is known. These social relationships are the background against which all writing and learning to write will occur. This research suggests that when a concern for these social relationships is incorporated into pedagogy, the apportionment and acquisition of basic literacy skills can be accomplished more easily.

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APPENDIX I : CASE STUDIES

Impressions of Anglo Learner/Writers
Impressions of Black Learner/Writers
Impressions of Hispanic Learner/Writers

Impressions of Anglo Learner/Writers

Ann Giovani

Ernest Howard

Ronald Boss

Valerie Unger

Ann Giovani

Ann sounded attentive over the phone when I first called her. She had a very young, almost childish voice. She no longer goes to Wordsworth due to the strike and her mother has enrolled her in parochial school. Over the phone she says she never thinks about writing, and when I asked her why, she responded "Because I want to be a nurse, an RN." When I showed an interest in the fact that she wanted to be a nurse, we got a conversation going.

I arrived at the house to find it very messy and dark. She was the only one there, since both of her parents work. She's 15 years old, nervous slightly chubby, and wears thick glasses. We talked about Wordsworth briefly. She said that she was enrolled in there at the Beta campus last year, but due to the strike and the fact that it was far to travel to get to that campus, she decided to go to a nearby Catholic school.

She said she only studies when she must, but appears to be a good student. She watches alot of TV, and frequently talks with friends down the street frequently. Her favorite subjects are history, English and algebra, which she likes them because she considers them important. She's a motivated student now and describes herself as someone who is more motivated now than she was in the past. She also says that she likes religion as a subject. It's new to her because this is the first time she's been in a Catholic school.

Ann says that Catholic school is a different place than Wordsworth, because there are "more rules." She had a definite schedule for how she spends her afternoons after school: She arrives at home, watches TV till about 4:00 then changes her clothes and visits friends. Later, she returns come home to clean house for her mother By this time, her parents are home and they eat, after which she studies. She also added that when she has alot of homework, she comes right home from school to do it. On the weekends, she says she usually shops with her mother and grandmother. In her words, "I really don't have a very exciting life, my social life is not very good either. I don't go out with boys like alot of other girls my age do." She went on to say that she has met some boys at church and those are the kinds of boys that she feels more comfortable going out with, because she can "trust" them.

She spent alot of time talking about how she managed to pay her tuition to Catholic school. Apparently, the school has an arrangement in which students can pay 1/5 of their $1,000.00 tuition by selling chances in a raffle which is conducted by the school. Not only did she win a tuition credit by selling chances, but also won the raffle, and had her entire tuition paid plus an extra $600.00 left over.

This good fortune inspired her to write a letter to the priest of her church telling the story of how she won the raffle, and that she's amazed and thankful for how God works.

Ann seemed commited to becoming a nurse. This goal seems to mandate her school behavior. Though she doesn't like to read or write, she'll do what she has to to maintain a B average. The goal of becoming a nurse is something that she chose on her own.

She talked about Catholic school, saying she likes it because of the strict discipline there.

Ann was so motivated to go to Catholic school that she defied her mother to do so. Her mother objected but one of the reasons she wanted to go there was because her brother had attended the same school previously. She described her brother as very smart. He's in the military service now. He was a good enough student to graduate early.

At one time, Ann was keeping a diary and this is something that she started doing herself. She gave up on the diary because her parents were reading it without telling her and after she discovered this, the diary failed to serve an important function for her. At that point, she stopped writing deeply personal things in it.

Another literacy event that Ann shared with me was when she wrote to the TV Guide magazine published by the Bulletin, in response to some of their programming. It has a weekly column where readers are asked to write in about what they think about particular TV programs. She wrote because she likes soap operas, and wanted to express her opinions about her favorite shows. Afterwards, she said she felt stupid and embarrassed. Her teacher found out about it, but, in her words, "ignored it." "It probably wasn't interesting to him," she said, becuase he didn't want to read what she had gotten published in the newspaper. She said, even though her friends didn't tease her and that they were pleased that it was published, it still embarrassed her.

She would like to write a book because "it seems like a good way to make alot of money, "but feels it takes too much time, its more important to become a nurse.

There is substantial encouragement for litercy in Ann's household. Her parents subscribe to three daily newspapers, although I was surprised to see that there was at least three days of newspapers that were unopened and laying on the front couch in the living room. Her parents also subscribe to several magazines, which include McCall's, Redbook, Young Miss, Baseball Digest, and Soap Opera Digest. The latter is the only one Ann reads.

I think the interview was worthwhile for Ann. She is shy and easily embarrassed, and was reluctant to even share the letter she had written to the priest. She avoided in-depth discussion of it in the beginning of our interview, but latter ran upstairs to get it for me. Finally, as I was about to leave, she offered it to me, and said I could make a copy.

Ernest Howard

The Howard family was the first one contacted in the NIE study. Shortly after our letter announcing the study was mailed, the mother called me on the phone. The first thing she said was that Ernie, her son, did not want to participate in the study, and that she was calling to notify me of that. She went on to explain a bit about Eddy's circumstances and why he did not want to be involved. Throughout the conversation, of about a 35 minutes her anxiety level and frustration seemed to mount steadily.

She started explaining that Ernest had been cutting classes, and that he was forced to repeat a year, so he would not be moving on to high school this year. He is presently enrolled in junior high school. His parents had hoped that he would pass this year and that he could move on to either Wordsworth School or into what she referred to as a program that would prepare him for the military. But because of his lack of attendance and lack of enthusiasm for school, he wasn't promoted to senior high school.

There were a number of problems that she expressed regarding his education, including his lack of enthusiasm and participation. In spite of these problems, I had the impression from Ernie's mother that Ernie is active, enthusiastic and self-motivated in certain areas of his life. Institutional education is not one of them, however.

One of the problems she expressed about schools was what she referred to as a "multi-racial" problem. She said that there is a lot of fighting in the schools, that because Ernie is white, he has been fighting with Puerto Ricans and with Blacks at school. Several times he has been chased home from school (these were her words) by kids of other minority groups. She said that he has very few friends, though she didn't know why this should be so. She said that Ernie rides his bike alot, raises and breeds hamsters, practices weight lifting, and is involved in assembling kit radios and listening to them.

Ernie's mother was extremely frustrated about his lack of participation in school. She said repeatedly in our conversation that he is smart but that he does not try. To give an example, she said that even though he did his homework these days, he did not usually turn it in.

I gained the impression that there are several problems in the family. One is that his parents respond with anger and force their expectations on him. It seems that force is the most common way of dealing with problems in this family. Ernie's mother feels that she does not know what to do about his "learning problems." She said "I've tried to hit the kid, smack him, but nothing happens. He won't change."

Some aspects of the family history are important here also. Ernie's father is a truck driver and has been a truck driver most of his life. Ernie's mother is a housewife and has never had a career outside of being a wife and mother. Both of Ernie's parents left school at the high school level without earning diplomas.

Ernie has two older female siblings both of whom quit school in the 10th grade, just about the same time their parents did. Ernie is just approaching the 10th grade and I would imagine from what I know of family dynamics, is that one of the reasons Ernie's mother seems concerned about his lack of participation in school and is dealing with this perceived problem as if it were a crisis is because she fears that Ernie will fulfill an established pattern. Her strategy for dealing with her fear seems to be one involving only force. The outcome seems to have alienated Ernie and initiated a rebellious attitude and not the sort of attitude that would encourage him to apply himself to his studies. It sounds like a stand off in the family. Needless to say, Ernie's mother didn't encourage me to come to their home.

Ronald Boss

Ronald is an anglo American blonde boy, age 14 who was born in New Jersey and lived there until a year and a half ago when his mother's sister and her husband took over as his guardian. His guardians are Jack, who is age 29 and his aunt Lyn who is 26. They have been married 8 years, have three of their own children, two girls and a boy. Jack works in an aircraft assembly plant, where he has worked for eight and half years. Most of his training he received on the job. He considers himself a skilled or semi-skilled laborer, and he has a high school diploma. Lyn is 26 years old, she is now a housewife. She worked intermittently between having children, as a bookkeeper for a management company. Both Jack and Lyn were reared in Philadelphia and have lived most of their lives in North Philadelphia. Ronald's guardians and he are all active Roman Catholics. Religion was not important in his life until he moved in with Jack and Lyn. Lyn has had a total of five years work experience. She quit work three years ago.

The family is integrated into a network which is composed mostly of Jacks' work and recreational friends. Jack is involved in the union, where he works on the strike and the executive committee boards and also spends a considerable amount of recreational time bowling and playing softball. It is from these activities that he has gained most of the friends currently shared by he and his wife. He's also on the safety committee at work. This seems to be important to him in providing a source of additional education. He apparently reads everything that he can acquire about safety related to his job, and attends seminars to learn, for instance, CPR, the effects of particular chemicals and assembly procedures. He says these things are self-fulfilling. He also feels that the skill he gains in going to safety seminars, as well as the experience gained as an active member of his union, will further his career.

Lyn is a housewife, and makes ceramics. She is also taking a course in Sign Language.

Jack says he wants his children (at least his son) to go to college. Heis saving money for this. Because he is not a full-fledged member of the family, Ronald will probably be second in line for money to go to college. Jack and Lyn do not know if they are going to be able to send him to college, and are currently unable to send him to private school, although they are able to afford tuition for their own son. Ronald wants to go to college, he says, to begin his football career. He is active in sports, and football is his favorite competitive sport. He also likes roller skating, bike riding, and previously collected baseball cards. He enjoys music, but almost exclusively rock as opposed to rap or disco music.

He writes letters to friends and to his mother in New Jersey. The reason he likes to write is because he "enjoys expressing himself". Ronald has many girlfriends, and is frequently on the telephone talking to girls and other friends. He describes himself as someone who would like to be out in the street, or hanging out with friends all the time, and does not like to spend time around the house or to be idle. At the same time, he does not like to read or do literacy related activities alone. He spends most of him time riding his bike or hanging out at the local skating rink. Weekends, Ronald spends with his father. The latter is a salesman at local flea markets, and open markets. He sells leotards, shoes and other items on consignment. Ronald refers to his father as a "barker." In some ways, I think this is an activity relevant to literacy, because it entails trying to provide, or create, a structural persuasive presentation.

Another job that Ronald has is cutting lawns for friends and neighbors in the area. Last summer he had a job painting numbers on the front of houses. He did not keep any books or documentation on this, but "keeps it all in his head."

Ronald's guardians seem to be concerned with his education -- particularly now, since they have been making an active effort to improve it. Lyn says that in school last year she read Ronald's homework every night, and would discuss it with him regularly. She made sure that everything was done "thoroughly and properly". Both parents were pleased with the outcome of this, because Ronald's grade in science went from a D to a B, and Lyn says it was because she helped him.

The boy's guardian consider it important that they communicate with his teachers. They are diligent about contacting teachers to clarify Ronald's needs, and they regularly attend school functions which they believe has contributed to improvement in his grades. They are also taking initiative in encouraging Ronald to learn to use information sources for himself. Whenever he askes them how to spell a word, they tell him to look it up in the dictionary which they have taught him to use. They have no encyclopedias in the house, although they plan to acquire one soon. They have subscriptions to several magazines, among which are Sports Illustrated, Time, and they subscribe to two daily newspapers. Ronald said that he reads these occasionally.

During the interview, I was impressed at how interested Ronald's guardians were in my questions and in me. As soon as I arrived, both Jack and Lyn shook my hand and introduced themselves. We sat down around the dinner table, Ronald on one side of me and Jack and Lyn on the other. We held a focused interaction for the next two hours. They asked me many questions, as I did them. They were thorough and quite open in their answers. This seemed different than other interviews, which were more loosely structured and parents sometimes chose not to be involved. Other parents come in and out of the room during the interview. Some people might regard this as a lack of interest, but I don't know if it is just that.

Such a focused interaction was good in some respects, and not in other respects. It was not beneficial to my end, because Jack and Lyn were so involved in the interview that it was hard for me to establish any kind of direct communication with Ronald. I would face away from Jack and Lyn to address a question to Ronald. After the question he would start to respond, but before he could get a word out, Lyn or Jack had begun to respond for him.

Valerie Unger

Valerie is a fifteen-year-old white girl who lives in a twin.home in the logan section of Philadelphia. This area is noted for its multi-national population and Valerie's best friend is oriental. Valerie attends a school in center city. She is next to the youngest in a family of six children.

Her two sisters are married and live in the suburbs, while three of her brothers live out of town. Her ten-year-old brother she described as a "pest" and Valerie grimaced when she first mentioned him. Her father is a night watchman who sleeps during the day.

Parental protectiveness seemed to be a powerful force in Valerie's life. her father allowed her to meet with Rick and I only with her friend, May, present. Valerie told me her father didn't want her meeting alone with Rick, since he is a man. He wasn't aware Id' be present. Efforts to be with Valerie in different contexts were persistently thwarted. A skating party, which Valerie and I had planned with May for over a week, was called off by her father one-half hour before I was scheduled to pick the girls up. This decision was made despite her mother's agrement the evening before in a phone conversation with me. In fact this incident was followed the next day by the father's calling the principal of Valerie's high school to find out what this research was all about. Going roller skating did not fit into his perception of research about writing. I was unable to reach him when he was not asleep to discuss his concerns.

Arrangements to learn to use the C. B. radio with Valerie were broken time after time. Someone took the note with my phone number so she could not call to arrange a time, as we'd earlier agreed she would do. Everyone in her family was sick with the flu and she was afraid I would catch it. On another ocassion, Valerie forgot I was coming and went out to dinner with her parents. I arrived a little late, and as it turned out, this was too late. Final efforts were met with a response that she was going to visit her sister and didn't know when she'd be returning home. A request that she call me when she got back was agreed to but never fulfilled.

Valerie's life seemed to be determined by family demands which she accepted regretfully. It would seem that, like Paula's mother, Valerie's father was attempting to prevent her from harm. With respect to the project, parental misconceptions about ethnographic research made contact with us difficult.

When Valerie and I spent time together or talked on the phone. I found her to be warm and friendly. She initiated eye contact with me many times when others were talking. When I arrived late after several efforts to get together, she threw her arms open wide in greeting.

With Valerie it seemed that a thick protective wall allowed her to be open within its confines. The huge German Shepard that barked loudly each time I rang the bell to enter seemed to symbolize the perceived barrier. That wall may also have been instrumental in greater apparent literacy in her home than in Paula's. Books were piled in the upstairs hallway. Valerie talked on her C. B. for an hour almost every evening. She and her friend talked together almost daily. Writing phone numbers and doing homework seemed to be the principal uses of writing. Like Paula, Valerie did not appear to use writing to fulfill many needs in her day-to-day life. Communication was direct, and if writing was used for diaries, that information was not shared.

Impressions of Black Learner/Writers

Benita Edwards

Bobby Terrell

Lawrence Underwood

Paula Little

Walter Macnamera

Benita Edwards

Benita is a Black girl, age 15. She is one of nine siblings, five boys and four girls. They range in ages from 8 to 26. She lives with her father and stepmother. One and half years ago, her father remarried after having been widowed for quite a while. Much of Benita's upbringing was taken care of by her grandmother in New Jersey. Benita has only lived in Philadelphia for a short while; prior to moving here, she lived in Glassboro, New Jersey. Her father is active in the union, and works as a truck driver and deliverer. He left high school at age 16. Her stepmother works full time at a packing plant. Benita's original mother died when she was 3 or 4 years old. After then, Benita was reared by her grandmother until she was slightly older and more responsible, when she went to live with her father.

Benita is becoming more religious at present than she has ever been before. This interest in religion is new, and she goes to several different churches in the neighborhood. She says that each Sunday she attends a different local church.

Benita described herself as a responsible and capable member of her family, attributes which her father encourages. She sometimes feels that she is not close to him, because he has so much trust in her that he doesn't take time to help her out in her own life. She has a nickname of "Angel" because when she is in class, she always knows the answer and won't help other people cheat. She receives excellent grades most of the time, but her favorite subjects are math and English. Unlike many other children, she enjoys school and almost all subjects. She loves to read and says that she looks forward to the beginning of school. She brought a book to me, which she is currently reading about American Indians. She explained that she always reads books, and even writes her own book reports. She learned this skill in school but practices it herself now. She says it gives her better recall and increases her ability to express herself.

As well as reading fiction, she also reads the Bible quite often. This was inspired by her grandmother..

Benita describes herself as someone who likes to stay home often, and she only has two close friends. She explained that one of the reasons she does not have more friends is that she is seen as too good of a student, an "angel" as she puts it. Another reason, she believes, is racial prejudice. She says that because she is a studious, light skinned black, many of her black peers regard her as kind of a White. People ask her if she has a White father. So, she has trouble getting close to darker skinned Blacks, yet she is dark enough and obviously Afro-American so that some Whites refuse to have anything to do with her.

Her father works alot, usually six days a week, ten hours per day. Benita helps with the housework and spends most of her time at home.

Benita's father reads aften also, and it is from him that she gets most of her books. He's a "good influence" on her, she says, but they aren't emotionally close, because he is too strict. He won't let her date and he gives her many chores to keep her busy all the time.

In the house, there are several subscriptions to newspapers and magazines. Her mother subscribes to Jet, which Benita never reads.The Daily News is also delivered, daily, and she reds it occasionally. She's currently reading it to follow the school strike, but says that she usually does not read it because it is repetitive and carries too many stories about bloodshed.

Benita enjoys writing now more than ever. She writes letters to her sister, who is still in New Jersey. She writes her own book reports, and mentioned writing to food companies in the area for consumer information. This is something that a teacher suggested in one of the classes, and Benita has continued to do so, even outside of school. She likes to spend time writing about her feelings, and she keeps a journal.

I asked her if she was a good student and she said "I guess so". She seems to work hard and be self-motivated, but lacks self-condifence. She does not gain the respect and appreciation of her peers, because she is too much of a "goody-goody," and so only studies for her own satisfaction, and to fill up the empty time at home. This all by her account.

She says she wants to write for several reasons. One, is so that she can become the boss of something, not just a worker. She estimates that one must write in order to succeed in work. She says she wants to write, and increase her vocabulary, because when she's in the company of sophisticated people, she does not like being talked down upon. She appears different from her friends in this respect; most of them use drugs and she considers them apathetic. She does not go to parties often because of this, and because people often put teachers down there.

Benita seems to be the paradigm example of an individual whose literacy activities are inextricably so intertwined with an entire ethical and moral philosophy. She reads because its the right thing to do. She doesn't cheat because cheating is wrong. She does well in school because it is right to do so.

Bobby Terrell

Bobby is a Black fifteen year old, who attends Wordsworth. He lives with his father in a predominantly Hispanic section of the field site. Their surroundings indicate that they are among the less fortunate families so far encountered. Bobby was born and raised in Philadelphia, and has lived at his current address for a long period of time, although he could not remember specifically how long. He has four sisters and a brother, all of whom are older, and none of whom lives with him and his father. He has, a fourteen year old friend with whom he is very close. The two take turns spending time at each other's homes overnight.

Bobby spoke little about his mother (he doesn't know where she is). His father was present during part of the interview. Bobby's dad works in a factory, and appears, semi-literate. He is concerned about his son's education, and was partially responsible for Bobby's applying to Woodsworth. He is hoping that this will provide his son with a better education than he could get elsewhere. Yet he cited the Catholic schools as his ideal, and was disappointed that he could not afford to send Bobby to one. He was hopeful that Bobby would acquire education and not "end up like me".

Bobby likes to draw and to collect comic books. His most unusual hobby However[is collecting turtles. (He has eight of them, ranging in sizes). In fact, the only evidence of literacy in the home, with the exception of a few magazines, was a page out of a book with a description of different types of turtles. Bobby did say, however, that he has "closets full of comic books", from which he draws ideas.

He has collected turtles since the age of eleven, and practiced drawing from comic books since about the age of eight. He also enjoys playing football, baseketball, skating, and going to the movies and neighborhood parties. He indicated, however, that he attended one party about a year ago at which the host was killed, this caused him to be more cautious about going to gatherings at night.

Bobby is somewhat inarticulate, as is his father, and not very engaging, although he appears to have a genuine interest in the project.

Lawrence Underwood

Larry is a Black boy, age 15 and one of the most active kids that I've interviewed for the research so far. He was born in Philadelhia and has lived there all his life, in or near the Olney area. His family has five members: himself, his mother and three siblings. Harold is 4, and is the youngest. Sonia is 17 and somethat older Ethel. His stepfather is in the household occasionally, but not on a regular basis. He apparently doesn't contribute to the family income.

Larry's mother supports the family, apparently with success. Larry mentioned that he was inelligible for certain kinds of scholarships at a particular school, because his mother's income is too high.

Until recently, his mother was a policewoman. She now works for a local cleaning business. She was apparently active in gang control with the police department, but quit that job when she was almost injured by some gang members.

Larry's original father is living in California and rarely has contact with him.

The religion of the family is Baptist. Larry describes himself "as not very religious", though he goes to school every Sunday at the local Baptist Church. He is well connected in the community. He has many friends and speaks black vernacular English well. He projects the impression of someone who is intelligent, studious, and not rowdy or involved in drugs. At the same time, he's "hip" and doesn't alienate his friends although he is straight, productive, and activity-oriented. He also sings Gospel music and is part of a "popping group" (or dance group) of about 3 boys and 3 girls who practice stylized dancing. The group dances at scheduled engagements, for which they are paid.

Larry also runs track, is a member of the Philadelphia Express, and says he is too active to use drugs regularly. He is also semi-allergic to smoke, and this is his 'out' when his freinds approach him or pressure him to smoke or drink. He said he prefers friends who don't smoke or drink. Larry is also a member of the Keystone Grant Lodge, which is a Masonic group in church.

His mother is quite involved in his life. She stops him from hanging around with people who use drugs, and does not allow him to frequent local hang outs, such as 10th & Olney. She is active in his education, and makes sure that he comples his homework before going out. He is not allowed to use the phone or go out at night on any weeknight. His mother is demanding and had him doing homework all summer outside of school. She created assignments, chose books to read, projects to complete and saw to it that he did them throughout the summer. Larry says that he is very close to his mother, and respects for her deeply.

Larry left his previous high school and came to Wordsworth to avoid hanging out with drug users. He said that to do this, he had to break off from the crowd.

One of the central activities in Larry's life is rap music and he spends considerable time creating raps. He says he has his own DJ equipment which he owns jointly with a friend, and they keep a diary of rap lyrics.

Paula Little

Paula is a fourteen-year-old Black girl who lives in an apartment in an integrated section of Philadelphia, East Oak Lane. Paula's mother is an 28-year-old single parent who works as a nurses' aide in a nursing home. She is studying to become a registered nurse. Paula has an eleven-year-old sister.

Paula's relatives, who live in North Philadelphia and New Jersey, seem to play important roles. At age ten, Paula wrote plays with her sister and uncle. These plays were read onto tapes which have since been lost. Paula's grandmother has a trophy room in which Paula's award for participation in a Black radio station's Black History essay contest is displayed. Paula wrote about Charles Drew, the discoverer of plasma, who died because a White hospital would not give him plasma.

During the time of the study, Paula attended Wordsworth School, which required a long bus and subway ride. She traveled with two friends, one of whom attended a vocational school.

My experience in Paula's life seems to capture the contradictions of independence/dependence which can be a part of adolescence. I spent time with both Paula and her mother, alone with Paula at her home and out in the world. A long discussion with Paula's mother focused on her work as well as her concerns for Paula.

Alone with Paula in her home, discussion was characterized by my interrogations and Paula's generally short responses. We taped one get together so that she could hear her voice. She volunteered, "I sound like a little girl," and described a phone conversation for a potential babysitting job in which the adult said she'd have to see Paula before she believed her age. Generally I questioned her about school, special events she'd mentioned, her friends and her interests. She felt that her friends were most important. She defined friends,

> They like to go places with you and if in trouble they like help you out. If you got something to talk about they there when you need somebody to talk to. Cause a girl around here named Trina, me and her real tight, we like sisters. She a friend.
>
> ...I really only got like ten really good friends. The others only talk about you behind your back and everything. It don't bother me cause sometimes I do the same to them.

We discovered we had mutual acquaintances whom we discussed. Paula questioned me about one girl's handsome brothers. Paula's mother said Paula talked about boys all the time with her friends on the phone. Phone conversations were a favorite activity, confirmed by my frequently reaching a busy line.

When I first saw Paula outside the home, I did not recognize the bouncy, confident young woman coming toward me. She maturely handled a leering male passerby by ignoring him. With a flourish, she dumped her school books in the back of my car. During our drive and dinner, she questioned me about my life. She managed to get me to talk about my life and my interests.

During our discussions alone, Paula related that she was doing okay in school. She had been moved ahead in math to an algebra class. Paula's mother's entry into the discussion after this particular taped session brought out an entirely different picture of school. Paula's mother had just learned that Paula has been skipping school and cutting classes to go around with her friends. The school hadn't informed her. She wants Paula transferred to a nearby general high school which would be more likely to inform her if Paula is cutting classes. Paula likes her present school because she had alot of freedom there. The disagreement became quite heated. Paula's mother seemed to turn to me to support her position. She feels very worried about Paula's being drawn into some destructive activity such as drugs. Paula isn't given any money for fear it might be spent on drugs. The tension between parental responsibility and Paula's desire for independence is dynamically high-powered.

I felt as if Paula's mother wanted me as a resource to aid her in handling this tension. Her requests were never concrete. But she always went out of her way to make Paula available and accessible to me. She even voiced concern that Paula might not be in the research if she were transferred out of her present school.

Paula herself,turned to me as a resource when she was looking for a summer job. She was receptive to my offering myself, Rick and the Science Center as a resource to meet Anita to learn about computer programming, her desired vocation.

In this experience, I found Paula to be an enthusiastic questioner. She spok with Anita for two hours. Her questions ranged from skill and training to those of a personal nature. She examined the training manual which she asked to borrow, she agreed to return to study it. It may be significant that in this context Paula did not take notes of any type.

I did not see nor was I told that Paula, used writing to fill many needs in her day-to-day life. Communication with others was usually direct. In her job search, for example, her strategy was to ask anyone she knew. Writing letters was not a part of her job search strategy. She spoke on the phone to relatives in Michigan, but made no mention of letters. Phone messages could be written, however.

The Black History contest and the plays are two outstanding exceptions. In each case, other family members were involved either in production or in the rewards of the product, i.e., the award display. This interaction may have served as the impetus to production.

Paula keeps a diary every day. Her mother also reads and writes alot, writing down some of her thoughts and keeping a kind of a diary as well. Paula went to Parkway because she wanted to be a computer programmer. Her mother has been encouraging her in that direction, and to go to college.

A big portion of our interview was spent talking about what Paula's mother referred to as Paula's "class clown phase". This was between 1979 and 1980. During this time, Paula was the kind of kid who would do just the opposite of what the teacher wanted. The teacher told her to sit down and Paula would stand up. If the teacher told her to be quiet, Paula would talk. She was getting alot of attention from this, but she was also disrupting class, her grades were fallling, and she was getting in trouble, even landing in reform school for a semester. It is interesting that this behavior of Paula's initiated a very strong and concerned response from her mother. When her mother really saw how serious this acting-out was, she began taking charge of it. She began saying "Paula, if you continue this, you're not going to go to the next level at the end of this year." Paula's mother began going to school to see if Paula was as rowdy as her teacher said, and when she was convinced that Paula was really behaving in a disruptive manner, she began to threaten Paula that she would show up at school. And it didn't take long before Paula realized that having her mother come to school ws embarrassing and not worth the attention she got.

About the same time in Paula's life, her mother intervened to take some control over the friends that Paula kept. Paula was spending alot of time with two teenage girls that lived in an apartment complex just above Paula's mother. These girls appear to be totally neglected by their mother, who left them in the apartment for weeks at a time, according to Paula's mother. This left a lot of time for Paula to go up and get into trouble with these kids.

Eventually, when Paula got in trouble for skipping school, Paula's mother really put her foot down and insisted that Paula not see those people again. Paula was really frightened about being caught skipping school because she had to go to jail and got sent to reform school. So Paula learned her lesson and since then she seems to be really willing to accept her mother's strong role in dictating acceptable or unacceptable behavior. These two events seem to have brought Paula and her mother closer together.

I was impressed throughout the interview with the rapport between Paula and her mother. Paula's mother's descriptions of these acting-out phases seemed to be totally in accordance with the way Paula saw these events. She and her mother seem to share an understanding of what had happened, and all conflicts seems to be totally resolved. Paula's mother had a sensitive understanding of what Paula was going through at this time in her life and at the same time, she didn't see Paula as wrong or unable to change. Now Paula's mother seems quite proud of her.

Paula is an active girl. She plays basketball for the Olney Eagles, she took ballet lessons until recently, she swims regularly and watches alot of football. She also goes to parties almost every weekend.

She was taught to swim by a twelve-year-old uncle. When Paula mentioned this, she also mentioned how intelligent this uncle is. She says that he draws and that he is good enough to be an architect now, and that's what he wants to be. And so one gets the impression from talking to Paula and her mother that there is a good bit of intelligence in the extended family, a good bit of curiosity and the discipline to learn and to perfect these skills. So this is a good environment for literacy and learning.

Paula's mother subscribes to Black Enterprise, Right On, and the Readers' Digest Book Club. Paula claims to read all of these regularly. Paula said that among the classes she likes most are sex education. She read the Daily News every day.

Paula is really interested in boys at this point in her life. She has many male friends. Paula's mother seems to have a healthy attitude toward relationships in general and seems to have been a good role model for Paula in establishing healthy constructive relationships. Paula's mother provides incentives for good performance in school. She rewards A's with money and gifts such as designer clothes. She made it clear that she rewards Paula only for A's, not for anything lower.

Another way she encourages Paula to do well in school is by helping her with her homework and working with her. Also, she involves Paula in her own learnnig while she is studying to be a nurse; they will often sit together with a textbook, reading portions of a chapter together, and Paula has been learning some of the same things as her mother. So it seems that their respective educations are a meeting place to share and relate.

Paula's mother does not provide her with easy monetary or material incentives. She encourages Paula to work for her own money; Paula babysits regularly and earns the money to buy the designer clothes that she wants that Paula's mother has also taught her about money management and bank accounts. She has a Christmas club fund and seems to demonstrate a certain amount of responsibility in managing money and earning the money that she wants to provide her the things that she desires.

My interaction with Paula was in some ways very much like the interaction I had with Ronald and his guardians. But there were some striking differences. The two interviews were alike in that as soon as I came in and introduced myself, we sat down at the kitchen table and proceeded to have a lengthy interview all facing one another. It was similar in that there was ample time for questions and answers, but different in that Paula's mother did not dominate the conversation, but let Paula speak for herself and encouraged her to answer my questions, listening as she did. This is very different than Ronald's family, where Ronald's guardian would speak for him. Paula and Ronald are very different. Paula appeared to be a person with her own will, rebellious at times, but independent. Ronald, on the other hand, seemed to exercise his independence only outside of the household.

Walter Macnamera

Walter was born and raised in Philadelphia, in the northern-most section of the fieldsite. He lives with his mother, father, and nine sibling. He is the youngest member of a nuclear family, although the house is regularly occupied by the offspring of his brothers and sisters who live nearby. Walter elected to go to the school where we have conducted our research because he believed that its curriculum would require less reading and he felt unsafe in the neighborhood where his previous high school was located.

Walter describes himself as a science and comic book "fanatic." He regularly reads the textbooks that have been passed on to him by freinds and the elder members of his family. He explained that he reads many science magazines, such as National Geographic, saying "They give them to me, so I read them." He collects comic books, and bragged in our interviews that he has actually covered one entire wall of his bedroom with comic books, and that some are worth as much as eight dollars. He illustrates his comic books and regularly enters contests sponsored by comic book publishers for the invention of new super heroes. He created "metro", a multi-talented hero with the power to generate "cosmic rays." Walter also likes to talk and considers himself to be a good storyteller. Walter seems to pursue these activities with diligent enthusiams, although most are solitary activities.

Walter, in fact, describes himself as a "loner". He enjoys taking long walks by himself, and exploring the local neighborhoods. He prefers brisk walking to other sports, such as track or basketball, although he participates in these organized activities as well. Another sign of his independent nature is that Walter prefers rock music to the contemporary Black music that is popular with his peers. He does not like rap music nor dancing. Walter explained that, because of his strong will, he gets into fights with other teenagers fairly often.

He writes letters regularly. At the end of each school year he writes letters of appreciation to his teachers, and described writing a letter to one of his teachers recently when she was married.

Walter also keeps a book of poems. These are not poems which he has composed, but rather ones that he has read elsewhere and enjoyed. Writing them in his own book helps him to remember them and refer to them subsequently. In fact, he does a significant amount of copying of many sorts of written texts, including poems, science books, and the comic book characters that he draws.

Walter is pragmatic in his attitudes towards school. He explained that the object for him is "just to get through." Usually he says his strategy is to "lay low" when he starts attending a new school and attempt to achieve modest grades. Then as he is about to graduate, at the end of a term or level, he will increase his effort so as to improve his grades in order to "get out and go on to the next school". He is planning on attending college at a local institution.

I was impressed by all the activity going on in the household during our interviews. Some of Walter's older brothers were working on a project to remodel their living room and add an additional room to their home. Walter's mother was repairing the stairway with hammer and nails during one of my visits. Walter is equally active himself. He raises plants and has a guinea pig. He expressed deep attachment to this animal, saying that often he talks to it about things he would never express to another person.

Impressions of Hispanic Learner/Writers

Pablo Amaya

Alonso Martinez

Sharon McMoore

Toni Fierro

Juan Leal

Pablo Amaya

Pablo Amaya is a boy of age thirteen, Puerto Rican and more assimilated to Anglo society than most of his Hispanic counterparts. He prefers to speak English and lives in a predominantly English-speaking household. Born in Philadelphia, he has lived almost all of his life in or near the "Golden Block".

His social-economic background is poor, in spite of the fact that he, his father and his mother are gainfully employed. His father works as a semi-skilled laborer, and his mother as a teacher's aide in a public school nearby. Although his father speaks Spanish fluently, his mother speaks almost none. Although Puerto Rican-Hispanic, she was raised in an English-speaking environment.

The religious affiliation of the family is Pentocostal and all members, including Pedro, go to the True Light Pentocostal Church almost daily.

Pablo is well integrated in the community and has many friends. When I arrived at his house, he was outside playing with friends, who during the interview, came in and out of the house repeatedly to talk and participate.

Pablo hopes to be a scientist and says, that he's "good with his hands". He enjoys bicycles, of which he has built two and races competitively. The week before I interviewed him, he had won a 1,000 meter race on his bike. He also likes to cook.

Pablo has a good ability to tell stories, and describes himself as someone who loves to create them, to which he attributes his good grades in school. He says that he gets his ideas for stories from watching television, or still more often from 'dreaming them up in his head'. This is particularly helpful, he says, in English class.

The household consists of five individuals: Pablo, and his brother, who is about 8 years old; their father and mother (his original parents); and also one of Pablo's aunts and her son. The latter two have only been living there a brief time, I believe, and will not be living there much longer.

When I asked Pablo about writing, we began talking about two literacy events, both of which were somewhat directed, school-initiated projects. One was what he called an "over report", a report about outer space phenomena. The inspiration for this report, the way he structured it as well as the content, was a TV show. The teacher had told him to watch a Nova presentation, which was to be the topic of the report.

What was noteworthy to me was that with very little instruction, he constructed an elaborate process by himself. He'd taped the Nova show, and simultaneously taken notes. He also had an outline of questions his teacher had given him to which she wanted responses. So with those three things, he wrote a report. He said that he produced the report by watching the show as it was being taped, and subsequently referring back to the tape. He felt that by the time he'd done this, he had answered for himself many more questions than the teacher had originally asked. Both this and the next example demonstrate that Pablo is a self-motivated learner who creates questions and projects for himself. Another report he wrote about the life of Abraham Lincoln. He was given a book at school and asked to outline it.

Based on that outline, he was to come up with some questions which he thought were important. Again, as he went through the assignment, he generated additional questions.

What appears different about Pablo is that he is school-oriented, willing to do what is required of him at school, and to use this as an opportunity for other learning and other literacy related events. He does not originate his own projects, or at least he's not a self-starter of his projects. When given a project from school, however, he follows through more so than many other students. He is goal oriented and likes to achieve in school, and in other contexts in which a structure provided for him.

He said he likes to do the best of everything. This orientation to goals is a striking trait with Pablo. He didn't question whether it is important to learn to read or write, and seems to accept without resistance the encouragement that his teachers and parents give him to use literacy skills. This makes me think that literacy behavior often fails to happen because students aren't convinced that there's anything in it for them. There's no value in the outcome, or rather, no anticipated values. In Pablo's case, he doesn't question the value of achieving or learning certain skills. And when he's given a project he has a clear sense of goal, and works toward it. The learning process evolves from this. He has a requirement to write a book report, for example, or a report about a TV show. Given little help in terms of a structure, and mostly when given a concrete goal to attain, things follow from there. In doing both the Abe Lincoln report and the Nova report, he generated original questions. He generated a step-by-step process whereby he could produce the reports. In order to achieve them, he had to learn fundamental skills such as how to generate an outline, and how to structure the report.

I think this relates to issues implicit or explicit in the work of Shirley Heath, where she says that you don't teach kids to read in order to get them to read; instead, you provide a purpose for reading and then they learn to do it. Literacy is an adaptation to your environment, and if your environment provides an incentive, making it advantageous to learn to read or write, then you'll do so.

Juan Leal

Juan is named after his father. I called his house following the mailing of our introductory letter. I was struck by the tone of hesitancy expressed by the young Juan and the evident suspiciousness of his father. When I called I originally spoke with Juan and explained the research to him after which I asked him if he wanted to be involved, and he responded "I don't know, you should talk with my father." When his father got on the phone, our first exchanges were in English. It seemed more appropriate to switch to Spanish, which I did, at which point I was literally interrogated for two to three minutes about the project, in a somewhat mistrustful way. The fact that I spoke Spanish with Juan's father seemed to lessen his suspicion, but he still seemed somewhat unwilling to get involved.

My strategy for dealing with this was to arrange an interview with the family rather than with Juan alone. I think this was successful because I met with the family in the evening this week, and as I was leaving, Juan's father shook my hand and encouraged me to come back. He seemed very pleased that his son was getting involved with the project.

The Leal family seems to be the most traditional of Puerto Rican families that I've encountered in this research. It's a stable and active family. The parents go to church on a daily basis and are active in church politics and extracurricular activities. Juan's mother speaks no English, and though his father does, it is not the kind taught in Puerto Rican schools. He learned it in the streets in New Jersey and Philadelphia. His education in Puerto Rican schools in English did not help him when he came to the states, he says.

Both Juan's parents were born in, and spent the bulk of their lives on, the island. They don't visit there often now, because most of the family lives in continental U.S., but they are still emotionally tied to the Puerto Rican island and culture.

Juan's father encourages his children to speak Spanish in the household because he wants to maintain the values of this culture. Juan prefers to speak English, though he likes to speak Spanish in the household, and wishes he could learn enough Spanish to be able to comfortably read it. But with his peers and outsiders, he speaks English. He did express very sincere interest in practicing Spanish and maintaining it

Juan has an ethnically mixed peer group and lives in an ethnically mixed neighborhood. He loves sports. He broke his leg playing baseball this year, and is just now recovering from it. He won't be playing any football this year, which he regrets. He also runs track and rides his bicycle quite a bit. He has recently decided not to go to Parkway school, but Central High, because of its proximity to his home. His peer group is geographically dispersed. Most of his friends are from the junior high which he attended until last year, but now they go to different schools. He also has friends from church, the Incarnational Catholic Church. So Juan has and is affiliated with at least three networks: the church, his junior high school, and a friend's house where he and other friends hang out.

Juan does not attend jams, nor perform rap music, although he likes it alot. He says the reason he rarely attends jams is because he doesn't know how to dance. When he said that, his sister, who was sitting next to him said "Well I'll teach you how to dance." I had the impression that he was reluctant to talk about some of the activities that he does with his peers, because his father was close by. Juan did say that when he goes to to jams, they're the ones put on by the church.

He mentioned a church retreat that he gone on earlier this year. It was a family retreat that he seemed to feel was important to him. He said its purpose was to keep people in touch with their families, to get people off drugs, and to teach them other alternatives for living. He said tha since the retreat several months ago, there have been bi-weekly meetings held by the people who had attended it.

One of the things I suggested that he do with that retreat was to keep a journal, and since then, he says he has been doing that and is really been getting alot out of it. It was something that I asked him to keep for two weeks, but he was motivated to do it beyond that, and for several months has been doing so. He says he writes in it every day, especially when he has a personal problem to work through.

I asked him to give me an example of how the journal helps him. He said that it helps him learn patience, and specifically, curtails his tendency to fight with his sisters. He also has been keeping written correspondence with some of the people who attended the retreat.

Much of the literacy in the household centers around religion. Juan's father reads the Bible daily. He also reads the Philadelphia Inquirer, but subscribes to no other journals, magazines or newspapers. The father's attitude towards his son's education is one of helping, but not forcing. He wants his sons to be whatever he can within his own abilities, but he doesn't feel that he can force him to be anything. One of his major considerations is his money. Helping, to Juan's father, seems to be equated with the providing of money for his son's education. He said he can get as far as he can with his father's help, but if he wanted to be a doctor or a lawyer, it would be difficult, because he just does not have enough money. Juan wants to be a policeman or a lawyer. He said he likes the excitement associated with being a policeman. But then, a lawyer seems like a respectable trade too.

Juan often works with his father as an assistant, constructing fences in New Jersey and also in the neighborhood. Apparently, all the fences on their block were constructed by him and his father.

I asked Juan what he though about writing and what he thought its purpose was. He said that he never thought much about the future, particularly with respect to writing. "I live for each day, as it comes," he said.

Juan said that he used to be involved with a social club at the church, but that he left it because that leader was "too holy", often dictating how people should be, and not recognizing that some people couldn't be perfect all at once. So Juan left the club, and since then he has been doing pretty much the same kind of activities, such as sports, games and hanging with friends. From this I get the impression that Juan is a fairly straight kind, and that being rowdy, partying and doing drugs are not a large part of his life. He is not naive.

Juan is fourteen years old, and was born in Puerto Rico. Immediately after his birth, his family moved to New Jersey. They have been living in Philadelphia for just a couple of years. He is the second born and has three sisters. They are economically stable, but not wealthy by any means. They have a small house which they rent and hope someday to own. It's a row house just north of Roosevelt Blvd., near Seventh Street. The family is not well integrated into their immediate geographical community, but is affiliated with the Puerto Rican community in Philadelphia. Juan's friends spread over a large area and he doesn't seem to be very close to any of his neighbors, most of whom appear to be Black.

I have two questions after the interview with Jose, bearing on the procedure of the research.

Juan keeps a diary which I think would be very worthwhile to incorporate into the research. I'd like to have artifacts like that. But his diary is private, and he was reluctant to share it with me that day. He may continue to hesitate to show me any part of it, even though I asked him to. I think, therefore, that we need to consider some of the ethical issues of asking students to share with us things which they have written for private reading.

The second question relates to the diary as well: How relevant are diaries? How strictly should be focus in the research on undirected writing?

Toni Fierro

Toni Fierro is a Puerto Rican boy about age fifteen. He has a light complexion and was born in Puerto Rico, though has lived most of his life in Philadelphia. His immediate family consists of his mother and his brother, although there is a large number of extended family members in the Philadelphia area, and Toni spend alot of time with them hanging out and working with different family members.

This is important to the research, because when we talk about the family structuring literacy and the acquisition of literacy skills, we can't consider only the nuclear family, particularly with poor ghetto families.

Toni's typical of many of his contemporaries in this neighborhood in the sense that he spends alot of time in several different households. The mother and the extended family take turns caring for the children, and the father's extended family initate projects and work with the children. If we judge that literacy isn't encouraged in one household setting, we may find nonetheless that it is encouraged and highly structured in another.

Toni's family is very poor. His mother is unemployed and lives on public assistance. His own income and support comes from his father, who lives in Puerto Rico, and is involved in the tourist industry. Each week, his father sends eight dollars, which Toni shares with his mother and spends mostly on necessary items. Toni is deeply involved in the Catholic church. He is an altar boy at mass, and also participates in youth groups at the church. At the same time, he's not a particularly straight or isolated boy. He seems to have many friends and though he doesn't use drugs, he does listen to rap music, attend jams, and seems to have many friends in the neighborhood.

He is well integrated in his community, near the corner of Allegheny of Fifth Street. This is a hangout spot for teenagers, where many members of sports clubs meet at the community center, and play hand ball against the wall. Toni says he's frequently out there playing hand ball and named several kids in the neighborhood that he knows and goes out with frequently. One of them which he mentioned specifically was a fellow named Whipple, whom I met subsequently. Whipple introduced himself as "Philadelphia's greatest rapper."

Toni seems typical of alot of Puerto Rican kids I've met, and he prefers to speak Spanish in the household, and in the neighborhood with the older people. With his peers, however, he speaks English most often, as he does in all work and institutional settings. He also seems to have plenty of exposure to Black English vernacular, because he's involved with rap music and has some Black friends and acquaintances, also interested in rap.

He says he doesn't write very much because he usually has something better to do. At the same time, there are many literacy activities in which he is involved. He is the local translator for his neighborhood. There are several middle aged and older Hispanic women living in the two block radius of his home, few of whom speak any English at all. He has become the person who helps them in cases where they have to rely on good English-speaking abilities. Among the things that he's done for them are: help contact the pest control division of the City Health Department; negotiate problems with the electric company; and aide one women, who sells cookware, run her business by discussing business agreements with English-speaking distributors in the area. There is also a woman about three doors down from him, who sells water ice out of her home. Occasionally, she has an English-speaking customer, and so she calls Toni down to help her sell the water ice, or to make sure that the interaction is handled fairly.

A large portion of Toni's life revolves around music. By his own account, he could sleep without being covered up, but not without music. He was set back a year when he came from Puerto Rico in the second grade, and so he is a year older than many of his classmates. One of the reasons he chose to go to Wordsworth High was because they allow students to "move at their own place." He does not consider himself an unintelligent person, but a slow person, and he wanted to go to a school where he wouldn't be highly pressured. Apparently, he thinks he could get good education and produce at his pace at Wordsworth. Another thing he's doing right now is he is reading the instruction manual to allow him to ge this drivers license.

Among the other kinds of writing which Toni says he does are lists of telephone numbers, frequent letters to his father, and family members in Puerto Rico, and recipes which he writes or translates for his mother.

The family was just as receptive to my being there as he was. His mother talked with us for a good length of time about various topics including grocery lists that she was drawing up. She speaks predominately Spanish and feels very uncomfortable in English. The grocery list was a task that involved Teddy, Toni's younger brother, and her. She had trouble remembering some of the English names for different products, and frequently interrupted our interview to ask Toni the names of products. In the production of that list, which lasted 5 minutes, Toni and his younger brother were asked to name and spell various items.

Another interesting literacy event Toni shared with me was giving directions. He told me that a week prior to our interview, he had been at a gas station talking with a friend when a man drove up to ask directions. The man had recently arrived from Puerto Rico and spoke almost no English. Toni was cast into the role of the direction giver and also as a translator. He showed me how he gave directions and it was rather complicated. Toni presented information in a very systemmatic way, drawing a map and explaining all the terms and the names of the streets. An interesting aspect of this is that even though Toni doesn't consider himself a very competent person in Spanish, he was able to give these directions to a man who spoke almost no English, and did it successfully. So there are two literacy related aspects of this: the structuring of instruction-giving, and the translation into Spanish.

Alonso Martines

Alonso is thirteen years old. He prefers the English pronunciation of his name. He has one sister, Mary, who is eight years old. They live with their mother near the corner of 5th and Erie Streets. Alonso refers to himself as Puerto Rican - saying "Me and this other kid are the only Puerto Ricans on our ball team and in the whole league."

Household composition: Alonso, 13; sister Mary, 8; female counsin, 11, mother.

Alonso's mother came from Puerto Rico to the Philadelphia area about six years ago. Prior to moving here, she had lived with her husband, but reported that he had abused her and was a heavy drinker. Now she says that she is very reluctant to get involved with another man and is very mistrustful of men. First the family lived in Berks County; then about four years ago, they moved to their present residence in the Northern portion of the Hispanic community. All of the family attends mass regularly, but they aren't in other church activities. His mother has been unemployed and living on public assistance for many years.

During our interview, Alonso's mother preferred to speak Spanish, though speaks English fairly well. She apologized for not speaking English as well as she would like to. Alonso prefers English and, like most kids his age, claims to speak English almost exclustively outside the home. Even though it is not always easy, Alonso's mother tries to make English the language spoken in the home - because it is the language that "people need to get along in the world."

Alonso is avid about all sports - particularly baseball - and some literacy activities are generated by these pursuits. He collects baseball cards, and has a small encyclopedia of sports information (he also has a collection of cards with war and military information). He ordered these in response to a television ad and knows them well.

The TV was on when I arrived - an English language game show. When our interview began, Mrs. Martinez turned the volume down slightly, but not so as to make it inaudible. From our conversation, I got the impression that the TV is on almost all the time.

Alonso hangs frequently with his cousin, who lives nearby. He has several friends, most associated with his sports activities. He was unaware of neighborhood jams, nor did they seem to interest him.

His favorite subjests in school are science and math. He doesn't like English classes, and performs poorly in them.

Alonso's mother says that she never pushes him in school and it seems that she has few expectations about his level of performance. She said that "as long as he does his best, that's enough."

Alonso was difficult to engage in focussed talk. Though he seemed disinterested in our conversation, he was never impolite. He commented that he would like to be out playing, and responded to me as if I were a teacher trying to make demands on him. Even though I said at least twice that I was not a teacher, his last question as I was leaving was: "Are you a teacher at Parkway."

Alonso was not especially motivated to attend Wordsworth. He said he simply checked the box on the form he had been given for Wordsworth registration because he believed it might be fun.

Sharon McMoore

Sharon McMoore is an Argentine girl, seventeen years old, two has lived in the U.S. most of her life. The structure of education and literacy in the whole family is what interests me, but Sharon is the one who, by her age, is the most appropriate to be included in this study.

The household composition consists of Tita McMoore, the mother (and only living parent); Sharon's older sister, Cheryl, who is almost 19 now; a younger sister Geraldine (15); and Charlies, age 11, who is the only boy.

The appearance and educational values of the family are different from what I usually work with. They are a very assimilation-oriented family, although they have some strong ties with the Hispanic community in North Philadelphia, and lived there at the time I first met them. Their contacts there are only with non-Carribean Hispanics; they are not interested in interacting with Puerto Ricans. They joke about Puerto Rican Spanish, and make racial slurs about both the Puerto Rican and Afro American. I say they are assimilationoriented because they recently moved out of the Hispanic community into a predominantly Anglo lower middle class neighborhood off Cottman Avenue. In terms of their linguistic behavior, they are also very Anglosized. All the children speak standard English with relative fluency. The older daughters, (Sharon and Cheryl) speak excellent Spanish, though Geraldine and Charlie are a bit different. Geraldine seems more comfortable in English than Spanish. Charlie is very uncomfortable in Spanish and distinctly prefers to speak English. He watches TV to block out his discomfort at being exposed to Spanish in he household. Tita McMoore prefers Spanish and encourages her daughters to speak it in the household.

Two things related to education are happening in the family right now. Sharon has dropped out of high school, where she had one semester left to complete her high school degree. She was a fairly good student, though not exceptional, and feels that education is not important to her right now. She want to play and party and has been contemplating returning to school during the five moths since I've known her. When she dropped out of school, she immediately took a job at a Wendy's fast food restaurant; for quite a while, she saved money while living at home, and then gathered enough to rent an apartment down at the shore for the summer. She worked at a furniture store at Wildwood for most of the summer, while living with a friend and frequent visitors who came from Philadelphia. The important point related to education is the lack of value that she places on it. Although she has high standards for her life, she doesn't see a link between achieving in school, earning money, and actualizing some of her ambitions.

. Tita's mother, in response to this, takes a compromising stance. She feels that its more important that Sharon mature and develop her own values through trial and error than for her to intervene. Tita is unwilling to take a demanding role in this, but quietly encourages Sharon to go back to school.

Sharon has also had problems in school, which she blames partly on the language difficulty. Charlie on the other hand has a behavior problem in school, and is a very poor learner. Tita has given up on him in school. She doesn't intervene to curtail his 40-60 hours of television watching per week, nor take any action to see what kind of friends or activities he is involved with, and seems generally uninvolved in his life. She expressed several times that she wishes there were a man in the family to guide Charlie's life.

There seems to be a clear line between appropriate sex role behaviors in Hispanic culture, and this is Tita's perceptions. There is a domain of feminine life and behavior, and a domain of male life and behavior. She feels inadequate to take on responsibility for education or filling out her son's life since he is a male.

Another explanation for why Tita seems uninvolved in her son's education and upbringing is more pragmatic. She is only a partially acculturated Hispanic living in the U.S., not Anglosized, and does not speak English very well. She feels insecure when acting within American institutions, such as schools.

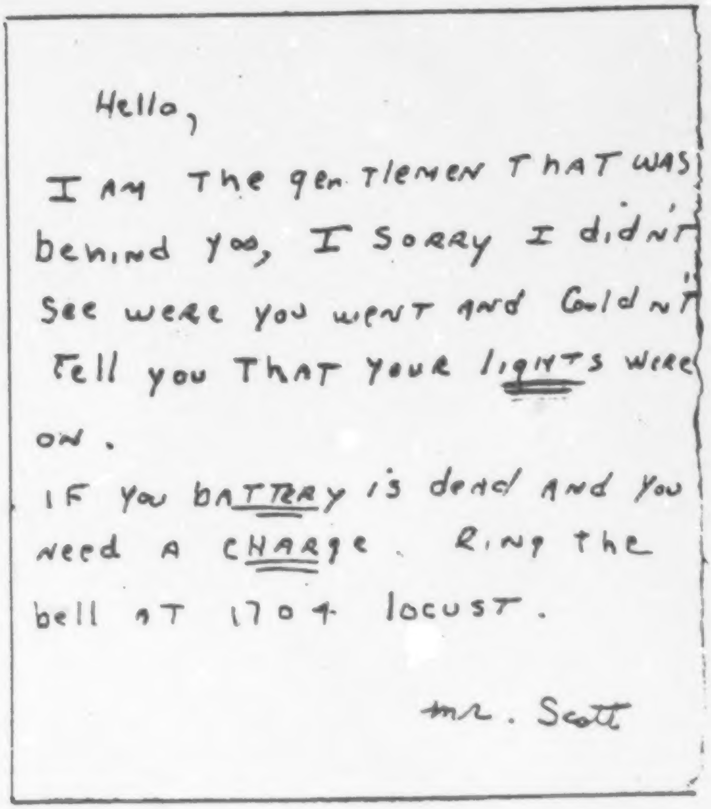
When the family moved out of the Puerto Rican community, Charlie was placed in school with a very small Hispanic student body and very little confidence in bi-lingual education. Tita can't go to the school and be assured of someone who speaks English.

She has expressed to me that any negotiation with institutions in the U.S. is very uncomfortable, whether it be the phone company or the schools. So the family is caught between worlds in many ways, and this affects their actions and decision-making around education.

APPENDIX II

Written Artifacts from Community

A.II, 1



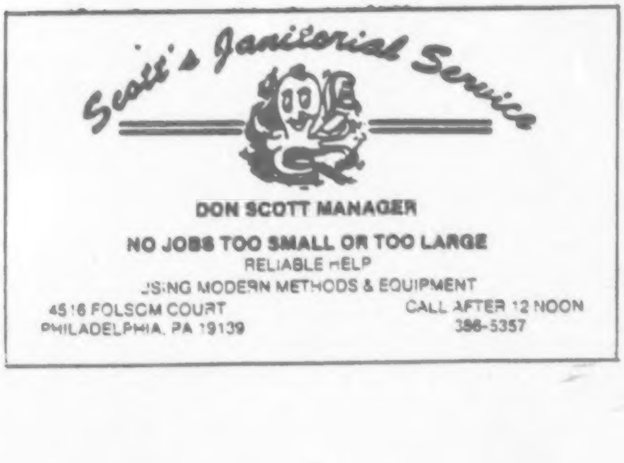
Hello,

I am the gentlemen that was behind you, I sorry I didn't see were you went and couldn't tell you that your lights were on.

If you battery is dead and you need a charge. Ring the bell at 1704 locust.

mr. Scott

Artifact # 1 : Found on car windshield.



Scott's Janitorial Service

DON SCOTT MANAGER

NO JOBS TOO SMALL OR TOO LARGE
RELIABLE HELP
USING MODERN METHODS & EQUIPMENT

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PHILADELPHIA, PA 19139

CALL AFTER 12 NOON
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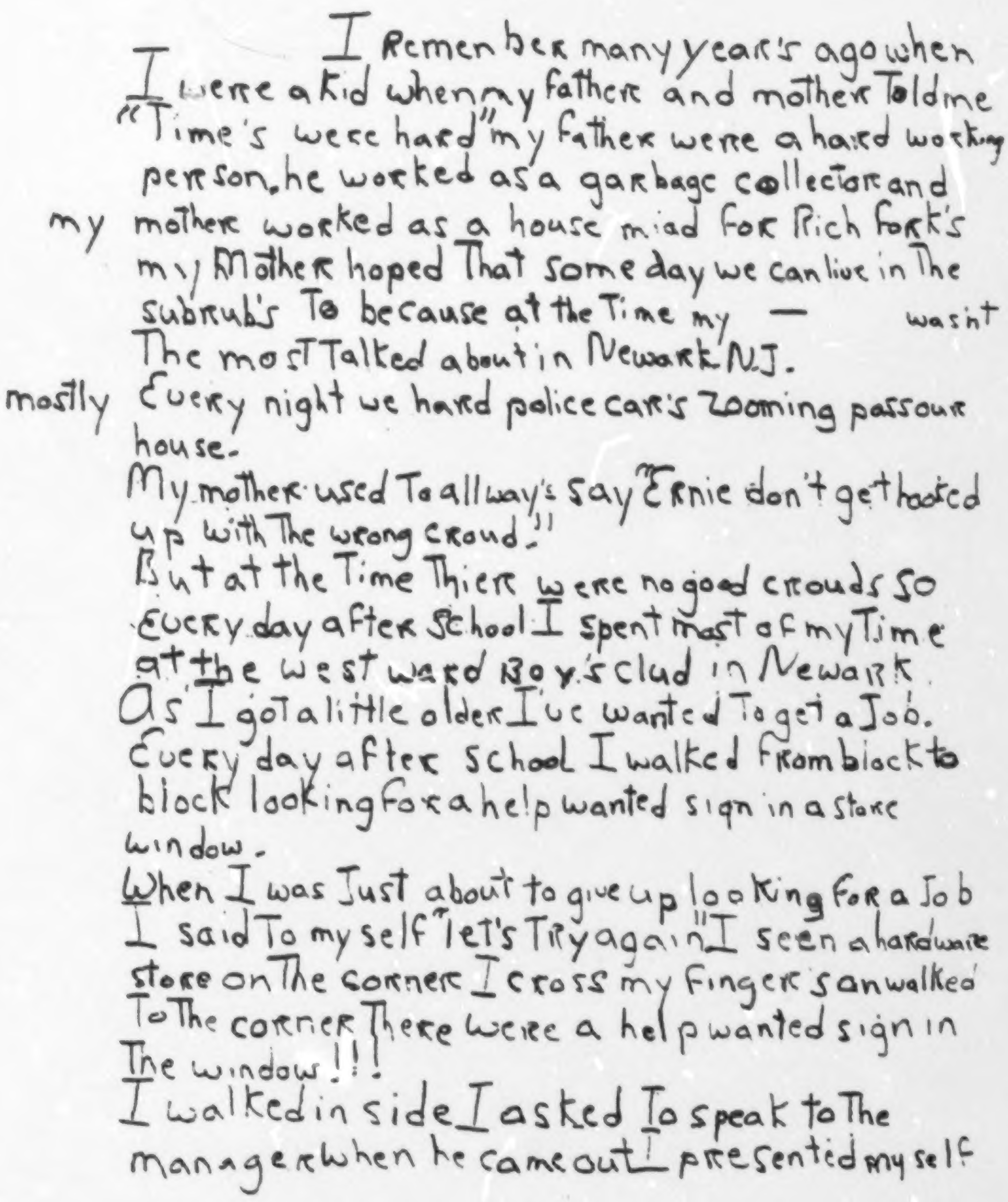
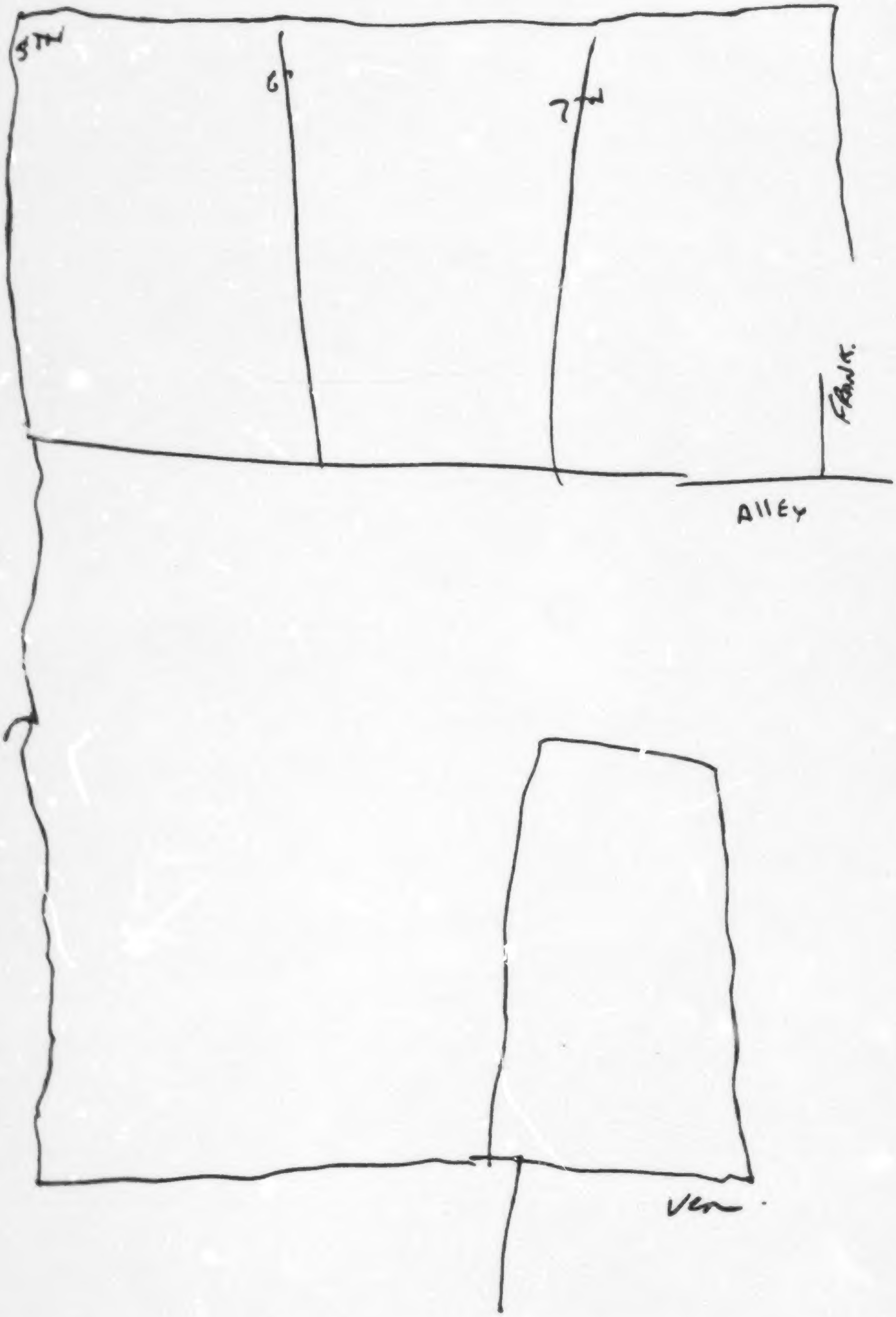


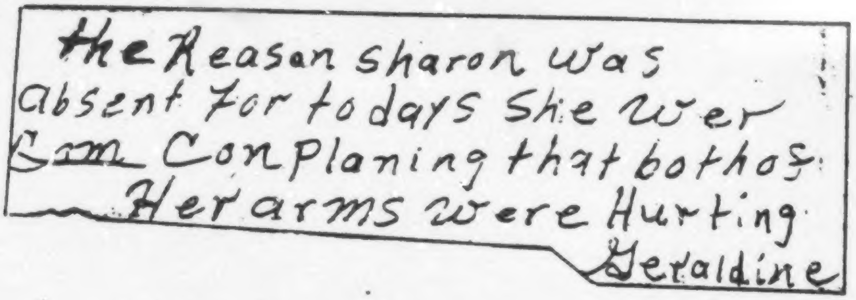
I Remenber many year's ago when
I were a kid when my father and mother Told me
"Time's were hard" my father were a hard working
person. he worked as a garbage collector and
my mother worked as a house miad for Rich fork's
my Mother hoped That some day we can live in The
subrub's To because at the Time my — wasint
The most Talked about in Newark NJ.
mostly Every night we hard police car's Zooming pass our
house.
My mother used To allway's say "Ernie don't get hooked
up with The wrong croud."
But at the Time Thier were no good crouds so
Every day after School I spent most of my Time
at the west ward Boy's clud in Newark.
As I got a little older I've wanted To get a Job.
Every day after School I walked from block to
block looking for a help wanted sign in a store
window.
When I was Just about to give up looking for a Job
I said To my self "let's Try again" I seen a hardware
store on The corner I cross my finger's an walked
To The corner There were a help wanted sign in
The window!!!
I walked in side I asked To speak to The
manager when he came out I presented my self

Artifact # 2 : First page of twenty four page short story written by black adolescent. Provided by the author's social worker. Author hoped to launch a career as a writer with this as his first attempt.

Page 1 of 1

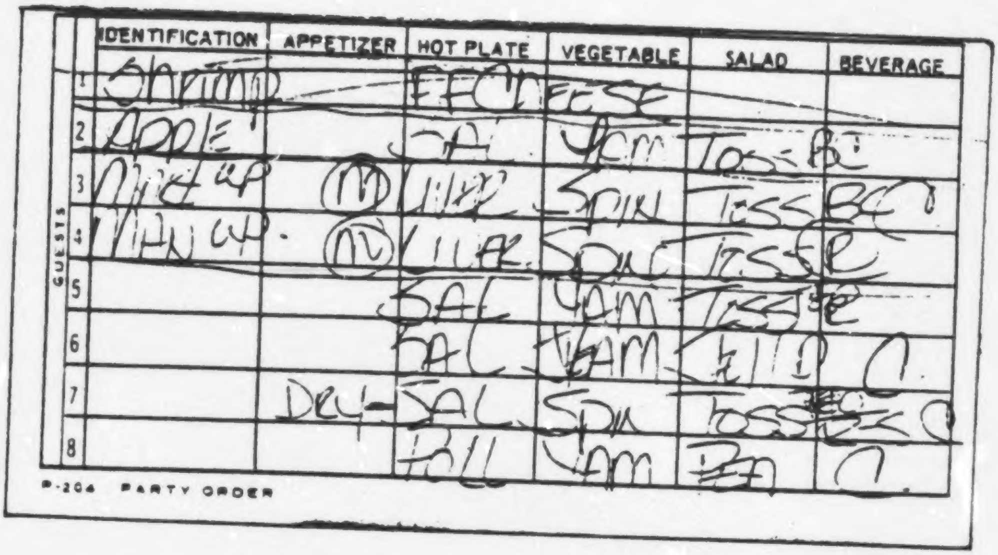

5TH
6
7TH
FRANK.
AllEY
Ven

Artifact # 3 : Maps accompanying 10 minute explanation of how a stranger from Puerto Rico was to arrive at a particular place. Directions were structured step-by-step and given bilingually.



the Reason sharon was
absent For todays She wer
Som Conplaning that bothos:
Her arms were Hurting
Geraldine

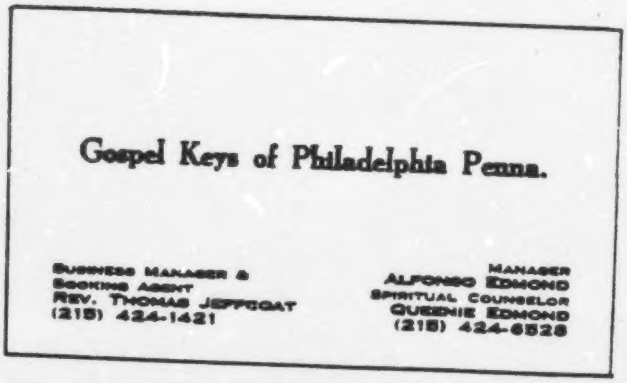
Artifact # 4 : Parental excuse to teacher, believed to be forged by a student.



GUESTS	IDENTIFICATION	APPETIZER	HOT PLATE	VEGETABLE	SALAD	BEVERAGE
1	Shrimp		FF CHEESE			
2	APPLE		SAL	Yam	Toss	BC
3	[illegible] up	Ⓜ	Liver	Spin	Toss	BC
4	MAN up.	Ⓜ	Liver	Spin	Toss	C
5			SAL	Yam	Toss	C
6			SAL	YAM	[illegible]	C.
7		Dry	SAL	Spin	Toss	C
8			Roll	Yam	[illegible]	C.

P-204 PARTY ORDER

Artifact # 5 : Page from waitress' order pad for places orders with chef.

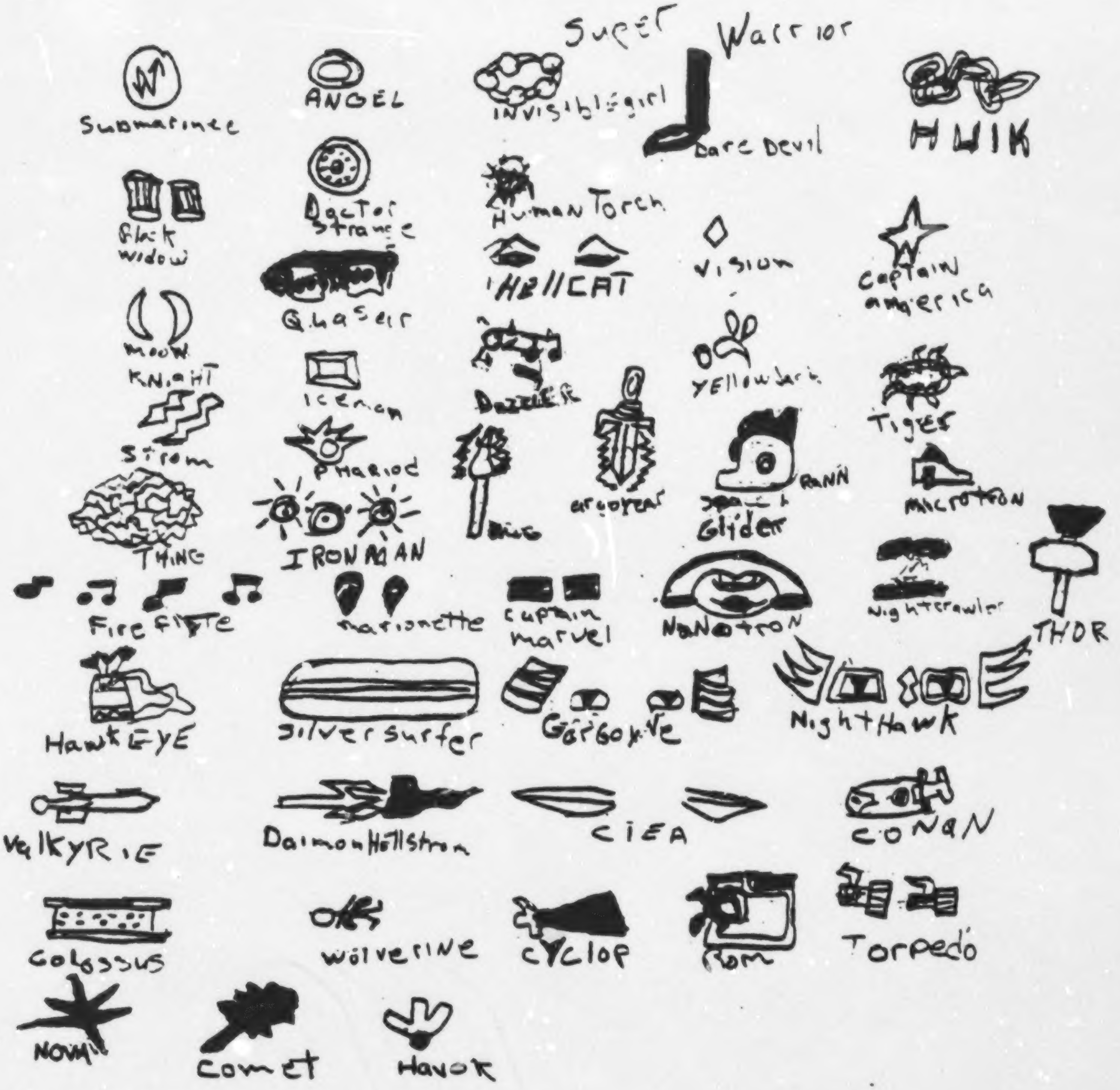


Gospel Keys of Philadelphia Penna.

BUSINESS MANAGER &
BOOKING AGENT
REV. THOMAS JEFFCOAT
(215) 424-1421

MANAGER
ALFONSO EDMOND
SPIRITUAL COUNSELOR
QUEENIE EDMOND
(215) 424-6528

Artifact # 6 : Business card of black adolescent student.


Super Warrior
Submarinee
ANGEL
INVISiblegirl
Dare Devil
HULK
Black widow
Doctor Strange
Human Torch
HELLCAT
Vision
Captain america
Quaser
moon KNight
Iceman
Dazzler
Yellowjack
Tiger
Strom
Phariod
Glider
RANN
microtron
THING
IRON MAN
Fire FIGTE
marionette
captain marvel
NaNotron
Nightcrawler
THOR
HawkEYE
silversurfer
Gargoyle
NightHawk
valkyRie
DaimonHellstron
CIEA
conaN
Colossus
wolverine
cyclop
Rom
Torpedo
NOVA
Comet
Havok

Artifact # 7 : Sketches of a self-described comic book fanatic. These were attempts to invent a new idea for a superhero in order to win a contest sponsored by a comic book publisher.

I love you."

There is a much greater motivation than simply my spoken words.

"For me to love, is to commit myself, freely and without reservation. I am sincerely interested in your happiness and well being. Whatever your needs are, I will try to fulfill them and will bend in my values depending on the importance of your need. If you are lonely and need me, I will be there. If in that loneliness you need to talk, I will listen. If you need to listen I will talk. If you need the strength of human touch, I will touch you. If you need to be held, I will hold you. I will lie naked in body with you if that be your need. If you need fulfillment of the flesh, I will give you that also but only through my love.

I will try to be constant with you so that you will understand the core of my personality and from that understanding you can gain strength and security that I am acting as me.

I may falter with my moods I may project, at times, a strangeness that is alien to you which may bewilder or frighten you. There will be times when you question my motives. But because people are never constant and are as changeable as the seasons, I will try to build up within you a faith in my fundamental attitude and show you that my inconsistency is only for the moment and not a lasting part of me. I will show you love now. Each and every day, for each day is a lifetime. Every day we live, we will learn more how to love. I will not defer my love nor reglect it, for if I wait until 'tomorrow, tomorrow never comes. It is like a cloud in the sly, passing by. They always do you know.

If I give you kindness and understanding then I will receive your faith. If I give hate and dishonesty, I will receive your distrust If I give you fear and am afraid. you will become afraid and fear me. I will give you what I need to receive.

The degree of love I give is determined by my own capability. My capability is determined by the environment of my past existence and my understanding of love, truth and God. My understanding is determined by my parents, friends, places I have lived and been. Each experience is fed into my mind from living.

I will give you as much love as I can. If you will show me how to give more, Then I give more. I can only give as much as you need to receive or allow me to give. If you receive all I can give

Artifact # 8 : Written by an 11th grade student
This "letter" was sent to the father of her ten month-old daughter.

People: by LaVerne Johnson

Children

9/14/81

C is for caring about them
H is for having hope for them
I is for sometimes being Incredible
L is for always loving them
D is for Daring them to do something
R is for Really being good
E is for Everything they give you
N is for Sometimes being nice

CHILDREN

Children can be good
Children can be bad
Children can be Nice
Children can be good to have

Girls

G is for always being good
I is for having great Ideas
R is for being Reasonable
L is for being Lovable
S is for being very Smart

GIRLS

Some girls are smart
Some girls are dumb
Some girls are boring
Some girls are fun

Women

W is for being wright
O is for being outrageous
M is for being magnificent
E is for being encouraging
N is for being neat

WOMEN

Some women are Pretty
Some women are smart
Some women are beautiful
Some you can't keep apart

Artifact # 9 : Written by a 10th grade student during her summer vacation. When asked why she wrote this, the student responded "I just felt like doing it."

Boys
B is for being busy
O is for being odd
Y is for being youthful
S is for Sometimes being Selfish

BOYS
Some boys can Be Creative
Some boys can Be fun
Some boys are smart
some boys are dumb

Men
M is for mighty
E is for emotional
N is for Naughty

MEN
Some men are weak
Some men are Strong
Some men are wright
Some men are wrong

Parents
P is for having Power
A is for holding their anger
R is for being Responsible
E is for being elegant
N is for being Nice
T is for being able to teach us
S is for being Shocking

PARENTS
Parents are Lovable
Parents can be understanding
Parents are Shocking
Parents can be beautiful

Feeling Good

Starting with a small dose
You go get High
But gradually you come down
And then you start to cry
I want some more
It felt so good
Get High with me
I wish you would

No! I shout
What's the matter with you
You should know by now
That's something I don't do
I can feel good all by myself
I don't need drugs to get me by
Why don't you come along with me
Instead of getting high

There's other ways of feeling good
I'll try to show you some
In which you don't need any drugs
And you'll still have lots of fun.

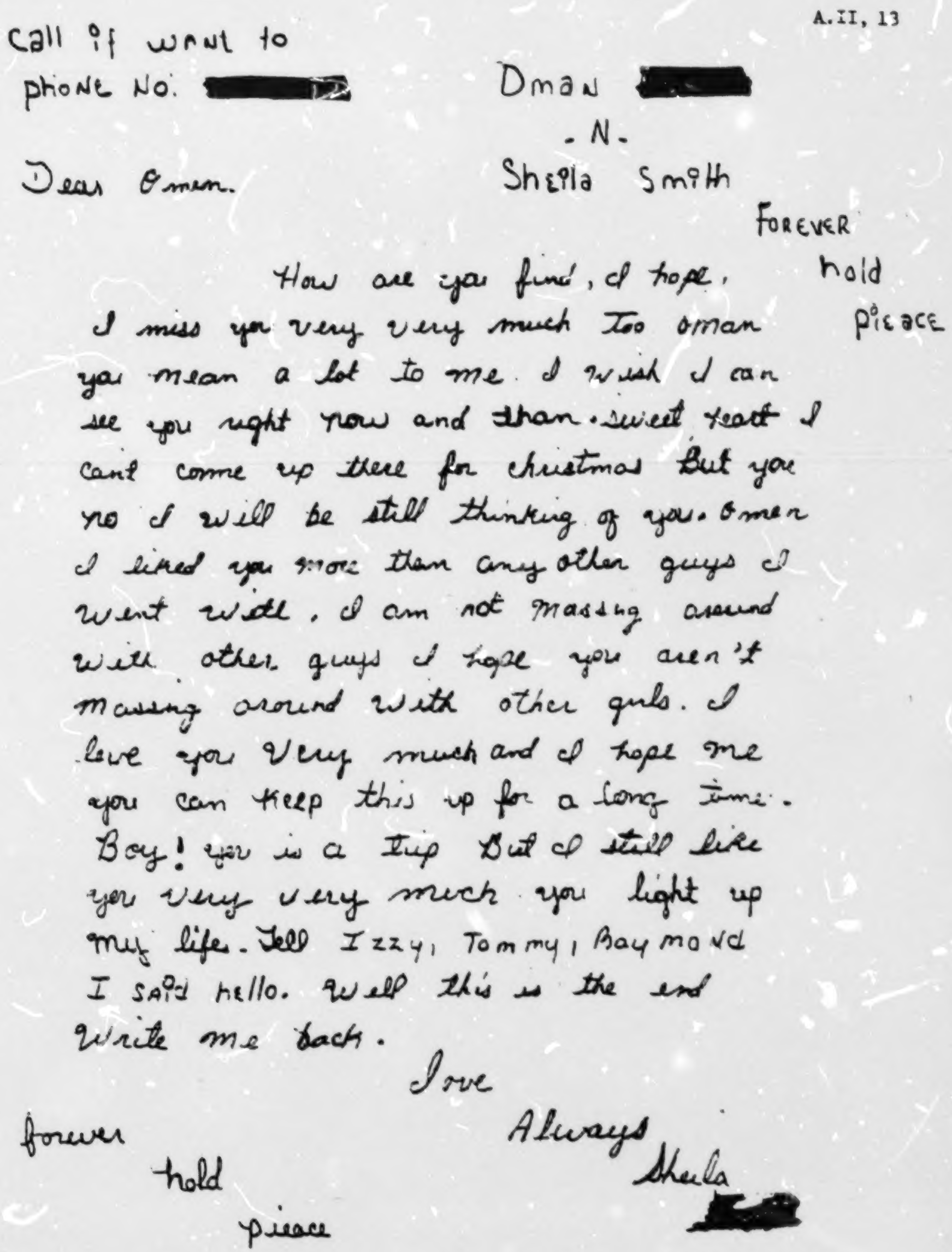
Artifact # 10: Written by a 10th grade student emolled in "Facing Life Issues" class. She was feeling pressure from her friends to smoke marijuana. This student writes poetry constantly. During the course of the school year, this student wrote and gave us copies of at least a dozen poems all written in response to specific feelings or situations.

A.II, 12

There are all kinds of people here
Each with something to do
They took they're time to make it right
And perform tonight for you
Some will try to touch your heart
With songs of love and such
And some will try to amaze you
While playing double-dutch
Others twist your mind around
When rapping to the beat
The dancers here are really great
They must have magic feet
Now listen close to every word
Watch each and every move
You don't want to miss a single thing
Because they've really got the grove
Our show will begin in just a minute
They're putting on the final touch
I hope that you will find it nice
And enjoy it very much

Artifact # 11: Written by the same student who wrote "Feeling Good". This is the only poem she produced on request. It was written for a Folklife Festival at school. Another student recited the poem because the aothor refused to be the "center of attention."

A.II, 13



call if want to
phone No. [redacted]

Dman [redacted]
-N-
Sheila Smith
FOREVER
hold
Pieace

Dear Omen.

How are you find, I hope.
I miss you very very much too oman
you mean a lot to me. I wish I can
see you right now and than. sweet heart I
cant come up there for christmas But you
no I will be still thinking of you. Omen
I liked you more than any other guys I
Went with, I am not massing around
with other guys I hope you aren't
massing around With other girls. I
love you Very much and I hope me
you can keep this up for a long time.
Boy! you is a trip But I still like
you very very much you light up
my life. Tell Izzy, Tommy, Baymond
I said hello. Well this is the end
Write me back.

Love
Always
Sheila [redacted]

forever
hold
pieace

Artifact # 12: Correspondance between two thirteen year old black youths.

Page 1 of 2

OimAN
-N-
Sheila

alwaysand
forever

Dear Sheila

I have received your letter. And everyday I think about you. I read that letter Because you mean a lot to me and I really wish I can see you righ now. In your letter you wrote that you cant come up here for christmas. And I started to think I have to until next summer to see my sweet heart.

Well sheila just try to stay sweet + beautiful and [illegible] keep thinking of the name Oiman Brown.

The End

and evey body said H. Sincerely yours

Oiman

tell your mom I said
H. even though she
dont no me

WILL YOU GO OUT

WITH mE! RALPH

circle

YES NO

Artifact # 13: Unofficial written artifact collected in Wordsworth School classroom. Author folded paper in airplane style and sailed it to the reciver. He never received a response.

Graduation is today
now we will find
which way our minds
will take us.

We hope to find peace,
now that we are not
"Boy" and "Girl"
We are "Men" and "Women"

And though many don't act
as they should; we feel
the same inside.

WHEN

When you think you have love
youre glad.
But when you don't have love
youre glad too.
Because you don't have the
pain and hardship that
comes with it.
Love is wonderful when
you know how to use
it.
Make sure your in love
and are loved Before
you go too far.

Artifact # 14: Two poems written by 15 year old white female. She said that she rarely writes poetry, but that she was inspired to write these when her cousin visited. She described her cousin as "very thoughtful and sort of depressed."

Page 1 of 1

China Notes

China is a huge country. The 800 million plus people are more than one-fifth of the world's population. Its area is slightly larger than that of the United States. Much of this large land area cannot be used to support China's great population.

The __Western__ part of the country is too dry to have many people. The western part of the country consists of Tibet and Sinkiang. Sinkiang is rich in minerals including oil, coal and iron ore. Tibet is one of the highest countries of the world and one of the most barren. The Himalaya Mountains, the highest mountains on earth are found here. Hardy crops, such as barley and peas can be grown here. Many of the great rivers of the Orient originate here. (Hwang Ho, Yangtze, Mekong and Brahmaputra)

Mongolia is the region northeast of Sinkiang. It includes the Gobi desert and a series of steep mountains ranges. Mongolia is divided into two parts: The Mongolia Republic or Outer Mongolia and Inner Mongolia. Most Mongolians depend on herds of sheep, goats, cattle, horses camels and yaks to make a living

__South China__ is often called the "rice bowl". This region contains most of the country's population It is a busy center of agriculture and trade.

__North China__ (Kansu and Tsinghai) suffers from insufficient and uncertain rainfall. The short growing season and lack of rain make wheat, millet, sorghum and beans the chief crops.

Most of __Manchuria__ consists of a broad central plain surrounded by a rim of mountains. Its soil is very fertile. It is rich in mineral deposits, coal, iron ore, zinc and manganese are plentiful

In recent times, China has rarely been at peace The nation was divided into two political groups the Nationalists, led by Chiang Kai-chek, and the Communists, led by Mao-Tse-Tung. In 1949 the Communists won control of the mainland. They mad Peking their capitol. The Nationalists retreated to the island of Taiwan (Formosa) since 1949, the mainland has been called the Peoples Republic of China.

Artifact # 15: Recreational Writing of 15 year old black youth. In his spare time over summer vacation, he amused himself by reading encyclopedia articles and then trying to rewrite them from memory. This was one of over 20 similar artifacts collected from the same individual.

A.II, 18

Dear Father,

I was going to Catholic school from kindergarten to fifth grade (so were my sister and brother) my parents had to take me out of Catholic school to put me in public school because they couldn't afford to send me or my sister, they kept my brother in Catholic school because he's much smarter than us girls and because they felt that it was more important that he get a good education. He was in eight grade at the time I was in fifth. He graduated from Cardinal Dougherty and my father wanted to put me in Cardinal Dougherty, because I wanted to go so bad. I hated public, I finally went back to Catholic school, my grandmom was paying my tuition, then my mother got pregnant and my grandmom couldn't afford it anymore so I almost had to get out. My Grandmother has been going to the Novena for twenty five years she prayed to Our Lady to help us well, I belong to Saint Ambrose parish and the high school students have to sell these chances if you win, you win $1,000 and the person who sells it wins five hundred well I took sick Friday and the chances were due Tuesday, when I got sick I left my erasable pen in the nurses office, when I was sent home I wrote my name in the buyers space by mistake and I couldn't erase it. So I bought that chance well that Tuesday my chance was picked I won $1,500.00 I now don't have to get out of catholic school and I thank The good God every day and I'm getting excellent marks! Our family owes a lot to God because he really does work in mysterious ways

Artifact # 16: Letter to priest written by 14 year old female after the occurrance of what she considered to be a miracle. She was embarrassed at first to share this with the researchers.

J 1,2 S 3.4 J ROCK Just a little more.
S Let's ROCK them soft J No Rock hard
S ~~[illegible]~~ watch your mouth and watch your card
J I'm ~~jazz~~ J to the A and zzy S He's a tod.lizing
brother so give him a try.
J. He's Shock, Shock, Shock, Sh, Shock, Shocking, Shawn
S I never stop the rythme to the early morn.
J Let's harmanize S Let's harmanize S Come on
party people S and let's soctolize.
JS.
LA, LA, LA, LA, LA, LA LA LA / LA LA LA LA, LA, LA LA, LA

S STOP, STOP, STOP Let's cut this shit out.
J. ~~go~~ go Shocking Shawn make em all scream
and shout.
S I'm a cool, cool, cancer, a disco dancer and I'm
hear to turn it out, next to me is Jazzy Joe
together we'll make you shout.
We're two for four, not 4 for 2
I'm MC Shocking Shawn and I do that do.
We go around the way we have a lot of clout,
Come on Jazzy Joe let's turn it on out.
IF you want to flash once JS ~~Bump~~ you got
to rock the house JS Bump J let's turn it out
IF you want to flash twice you got to be nice
S Bump, Bump J let's turn it out. Young ladies,
ladies, lay, ladie ladies yall sweat yang
thang. Go to the store buy a rose cut or
even a ring ding.
go front go back go side go forth from the sout
to the west to the east to the nort.

J.
Let's sotholize, S let's harmonize J and while
were at it analize.
S go fast J go fast S go fast ~~go~~ fast S and while where
at it tet's shake there ass.

J. yes it's the finger fucking, tittie socking S get some
ass right in the grass J in and out you make
her shout S you stick your dick right in her but
then you have to bust a nut S you give your body
a little speed, then you try to make her bleed.
S mothe fucking tittie suckens J ~~get some ass~~ S
~~rin~~ do no eating while it's bleeding stop
the fack becauge bleeding.

S Slow, Slow, Slow Joe go back to Slow Joe.
J I'm Jazzy Joe and I'm a virgo and my occupation
is a gigilow.
S Whatch out, whatch out watch out for me
J He's a fly fly gy name shockinshawny.
S My rap is more good than hot apple pie,
J I can give a girl a Kiss ~~a~~ make her cry.
JS So Watch out. S for the rappatears
J I Can rock your body to this very day,
verse ②
S Jazzy Joe, Jazzy Joe, Jazzy, Joe Joe Joe
J The girls pay me for love when they get there
pay.
verse ①
____
I can rock the house any day or night
verse ② ____
____
J. my mind and my soul is out of sight.

nice
Verse①
My meat nick name is 10 inch rover.
J[illegible]e
Verse 6

J Come on Shocking Shawn and let's
turn it over.
Verse ②
Shocking Shawn Shocking Shawn Shock Shock
Shocking Shawn.
J For the ladies in the place that want this body
Verse ②

S We can make a little love after the party
Verse 2

S Yes. Yes, young ladies I'm hear-to [illegible] Clay
Verse 2

S Keep all the money and I'm hear to stay.
J. They say that I'm like the long ranger
but that he is a little stranger.
For the enorse silver I were Segio's
I go Shocking Shawn instead of tanto.
S Batman and Robin was running down the
street The met Shocking Shawn the fly
fly guy and took money.

Jazzy Joe got in the bat mobile and was
really on the go. he pushed the ~~cup~~ [illegible] button came
something ~~that~~ you should all Know.
UP in the air went the fucking chair.
and Joe dropped his hat. That aint the bad thing
That aint the bad ~~thing~~ that brother laid a fart.
J-Bu[illegible]
Let's rock HA HA Let's rock HA HA the house
Let's rock HA HA Let's [illegible] come on Let's turn it out.

Artifact # 17: First draft of Rap poetry produced by two brothers, ages 13 and 16, for public performance. Lyrics were written ollectively in the living room of their home.

Sample of non-directed writing as collected from research respondent. A.II,23

Daddy Storm

I'm back again, I've just arrived,
Gonna blow out the place from 9 to 5
~~I'm B.J Sam~~Like wam-bam, I B.J Sam
And everybody knows. I'm a Melody Man
I'm on like a light, in the middle of the night
I'm here to make you feel alright
I'm gonna rap to the beat in Disco
And tell you about some guy I know
Now this guy I know is on the one
He like to get blized + have his fun
His name is Clyde + you can't hide
He'll rock your boat from side to side
He'll make you dip + make you slip
And take you to a brand new trip
Now that was his name when he was born
But now he goes by the name of Daddy Storm
And when he rains, he really poures
And he always keeps some thunder in store.

But don't judge a book by its cover
If you mess with him, he'll take alot
But watch yourself when he starts to get hot
Cause the clouds will start to come & it's cold not warm
Then you'll feel the wrath of Daddy Storm
He's tall & strong with a 34 waist
He'll rock the girls with a steady pace
Now when me & Daddy Storm get together
You can't deal with us in no kind of weather
Cause I'll rock the block & shoot the breeze
Won't say God bless if you start to sneeze
Cause Im a mighty might don't you known
& if you don't like it, you know where you can go
Say ho-down yall, aint this a blip
Im gonna rap to yall on the real tip
I say ding-dang, if you feeling warm
That means you've just been hit by Daddy Storm
So ~~clap~~ ~~start you li~~ your hands everywhere this is a toetapin affair

Now just let me shoot down a line
While I rap to you with a nursery ryme
Like this old bus ~~man~~ he played the one
He's a high flyin disco son-of-a-gun
This old bas ~~ma~~ played the 2
He started to sneeze & caught the flue
This old bas he played 3
You better get away from me
~~He came over acting crazy~~
This old bas he played 4
He came to me then I slamed my door
This old bas he played 5
He started talkin his old sive
This old bus he play 6
He saw ~~jumped~~ ~~like~~ a drog & started gettin his kicks
This old bas he played 7
He tried to rob the 7-11
This old bus played the 8
He was runnin from the cop & flip over a gate
This old bas played the 9

He was messin with his women, & was shoot in the behind
This old bas played the 10
He saw this girl & started to grin
This old bas played the 11
Her old man shot him & he went to heaven
And when he finaly played the 12
They kicked him out & send him to hell
Now I switched up with Mother Goose
Cause Im a M.C. who likes to let loose
Now back to the man of the hour
That's Daddy Storm with the power
Now Daddy Storm is on the go
With his fly boy frames & radio
He's brownot skin, not white not yellow
He's a surenough ok mellow fellow
So like a apple to a orange & a peach to a plum
Daddy Storm is on the fun
When He goes to parties, he likes to get high
He then checks out the freaks that goes on by

He's a versitile brother with a stable mind
He's a ok brother who's one of a kind
So one more thing before I go
This is one thing you should know
Just remember how to get it on
Or you'll have to ~~anserwer~~ anser to Daddy Storm

Artifact: Excerpt from the rap lyric notebook of an experienced rapper and aspiring entertainer. This was one of several raps contained in four volumes produced by the respondent.

He's 6'2", 220 lbs. he's a sureshot brother, who likes to get down
And when he's playing ball he feels no fatigue.
Cause he's the best ~~football~~ player in the Cathlic League
He'll hit you high & hit you low
But he works all the flygirls nice & slow
So if you see his picture on the news
You'll know he's a brother that just can't loose
But off the field it's a different story
Let me tell you about this man & his glory
When he gets dressed up & G.Q. down
That means he's going out & paint the town
Then he takes out his brush & plays his waves
Goes to Oak Lane & checks out all the babes
When the girls see him, they start to utter
And when he touches them they melt like butter
So all you girls stop your snorin
Cause daddy's comin through & he's really stormin (pause)
~~I say~~ Now Daddy Storm is like no other.

A.II, 29

MINISTERIO DE OBRAS PUBLICAS Y TRANSPORTES
INSTITUTO GEOGRAFICO NACIONAL
Apartado: 2272
San José, Costa Rica, A.C.

Geodesia y Cartografía
Tel. 26-12-45

Administración
Tel. 26-64-06

SEP 13 1981

·235

San José, 27 de agosto de 1981

Señores
UNIVERSITY CITY SCIENCE CENTER
3624 Science Center
Philadelphia, PENNSYLVANIA 19104 - USA
Attn.: Don H. Overly, Vice-President
S. O.

Estimados señores:

Recibimos con mucho agrado la oferta de servicios de la firma UNIVERSITY CITY SCIENCE CENTER que ustedes representan, en respuesta al llamado a concurso para realizar el Programa de Investigaciones del Convenio de Cooperación Técnica ATN/SF-1869-CR (GOCR/BID).

Luego del estudio de las respectivas ofertas por una Comisión designada para esos efectos, se hizo la escogencia y aún cuando la firma que ustedes representan llenaba los requisitos y necesidades nuestras, nos permitimos comunicarles que fueron escogidas únicamente 5 compañías, no figurando dentro de la lista de entidades seleccionadas la firma por ustedes representada.

Les quedamos altamente agradecidos por su participación y su interés en trabajar con nosotros.

Sin otro particular, los saludamos a ustedes con la atención que se merecen,

FERNANDO M. RUDIN RODRIGUEZ
DIRECTOR GENERAL

FRR/mdes.

cc: Archivo
: Copiador

Artifact # 20: Translation of letter performed by Puerto Rican secretary as a work related assignment. It is interesting that the writing task was left incomplete (see Item # 3) because the necessary job of translation was accomplished beforehand.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Dear Gentlemen:

We received your firm services offer (JCSC), with lot of agreeability in response of the congregation to perform the Investigations Program of the Convention of Technics Cooperation ATN/SF-1869-BR (GOCR/BID).

After learning the perspective offers by an appointed committee for that effects, we decid to communicate that had been chosen only five companies not figuring in the selection list the firm that you represent. (JCSC not among the 5)

We appreciate your participation and ~~your~~ the interest you have in working with us.

Without any other particular matter best regards to you with the attentiveness you deserve.

From GRANT GRISSOM

Don – This is far from polished prose, but I didn't want Anna Maria (who, as you can see, has some problems with English) to spend more time on it since the message is clear.

Grant

APPENDIX III

Written Artifacts from School Implementation

Title Basketball

Ⓐ Plays
① offense pg. 1
② defense pg 2

Ⓑ Team Conferences
① Eastern division - Alantic, pg. 3
and Central.
② Western division - Midwest, pg. 4
and Pacific,

Ⓒ Superstars
① Top ten players pg. 5
② Top scorers pg. 6
③ Top ten teams pg. 7
④ Top ten in blocked shots pg. 8

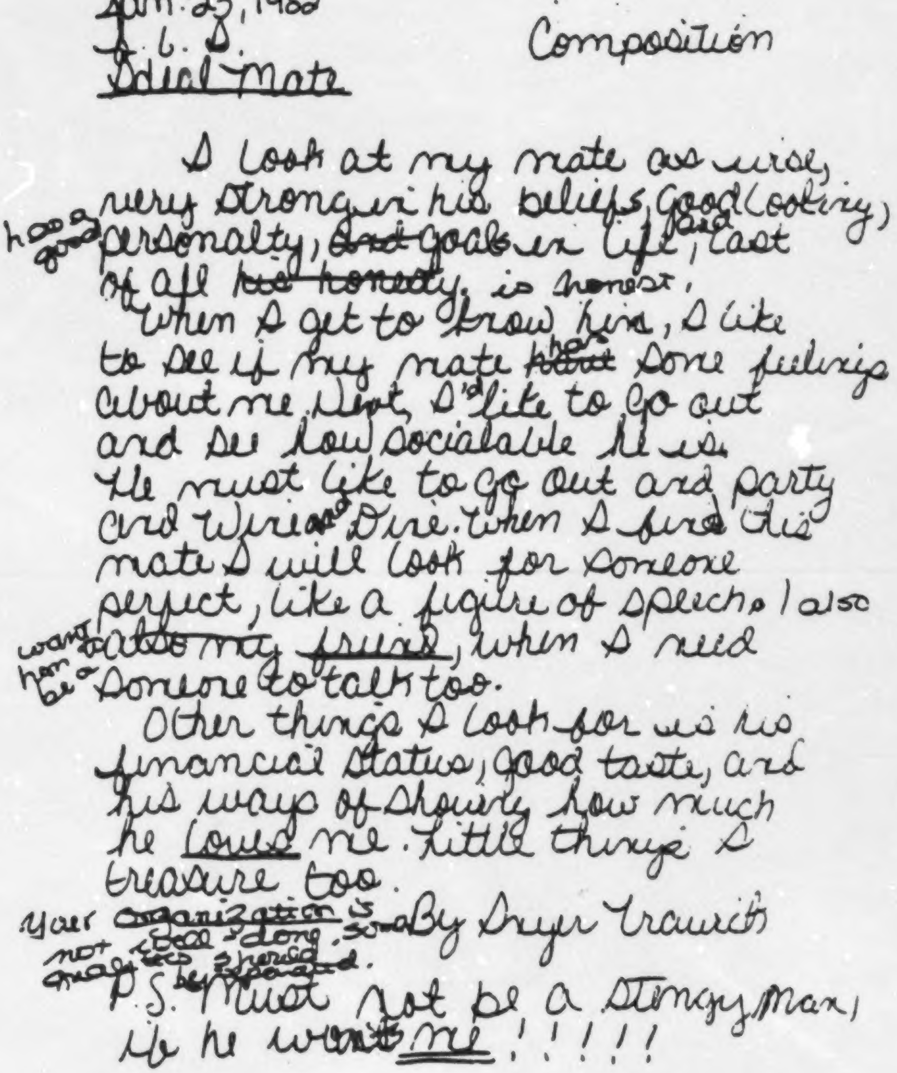
Ⓓ Biography
① Wilt Chamberlain basketball
history pg. 9

Ⓔ All Star team
① Eastern pg. 10
② Western p 11

Ⓕ Championships
① NBA pg. 12-13
② NCAA pg. 14.

Artifact # 1 : Table of contents of a "magazine" submitted by student who "usually writes only a couple of sentences when you ask him for a page."

Assignment: Major project for phase 2 of implementation.



Jan. 25, 1982
J. C. S.
Composition

Ideal Mate

I look at my mate as wise, very strong in his beliefs, good looking, has a good personality, ~~and~~ goals in life, and last of all ~~his honesty~~ is honest.

When I get to know him, I like to see if my mate has ~~have~~ some feelings about me. Next, I'd like to go out and see how sociable he is. He must like to go out and party and Wine and Dine. When I find this mate I will look for someone perfect, like a figure of speech. I also want him to be a ~~also my~~ friend, when I need someone to talk too.

Other things I look for is his financial status, good taste, and his ways of showing how much he loves me. Little things I treasure too.

By Inger Trawick

Your organization is not good. Some sentences should be separated.

P.S. Must not be a stingy man, if he wants me!!!!!

Artifact # 2 : Written in completion of an asignment given prior to implementation. Teacher commented on poor organization, and syntax and lack of conclusion.

Assignment: What do you look for in an ideal mate?

March 30 1982
F. L. S.

A.III, 3

Soul Music - I listen to Mellow slow records sometime, and fast mellow records too. When I listen to Mellow slow records I listen to these: I do love you, you Send Me, turn off the light, "And the Beat Goes On", and I don't go Shopping for love. These are just some of the nice slow records to listen to when your with someone or by your self just rememberiny what happen to you when this certain record came out. The fast records I listen to have a beat that not to fast, just the right speed you can enjoy your style of dancing such as, Mirror, Mirror on the wall, Must be the music, Thank, God its Friday, Behind the Grove by teena Marie, and Cool C-o-o-l Cool. These are just a few mellow fast jams,

that I injoy.

Jazz Music - Is in a style of its On. It relax the mind, make the mind dance to a real slow triumpet sound. Jass is good for people who like to listen to piano, drums, and horns all into a real Classy beat. Some jass music put you into tap dancing feelin, wai

Go with the music "beat first" like you expressing what trying to come out. That tap that people get a meaning to without the words, but just with sounds jazz put you sight their like its really happening, back in the Rag-time days you just let the music flow into the blood, and bone do the ~~movement~~ action. Some mellow and soft jazz like Harry "Sweet Edison, the Podock jump with Count Basay, and Buck Clator, who sings "High life. It got all that trumph and piano back-ground thats very soft'....

March 30, 1982
facing life Issues

Rock Music - I enjoy some-time depending on if its not hard Rock. Rock music make me bounce, I mean it just got that beat that make you jump & bounces. I like rock music when I'm watch T.V. or when I feel like listening to different music. I like these type of Singers or group. Blondie, Devo, Go-Go's, Rod Stewart, Prince, and Pat Benatar. These are the real Rocker I enjoy listening too.

Artifact # 3 : Teacher commented on increased length and improved organization.

Assignment: What type of music do you enjoy? Phase 1 of implementation.

June 14, 1982

Facing Life Issues

I really liked the writing program. It gave me a chance to express myself through my writing. I liked writing before but I like it even better now. I liked being able to talk to other students about what I ~~have~~ had written. I felt better about the finished product, more confident. I don't feel self-concious about my writing anymore, because I can have my friend's opinion about it. I feel much better about going to school. I'm proud of my writing now, and that means a lot to me. When I did my first project, which was about music, I thought it was really great that I got to write in my own style sort of freelance. The second project that we did I got more involved with. I made graphs questionnaires and I did research and wrote more pages that were specific and to the point. I think it was importa because we learned how to deal with other people's critiques. If we hadn't been able to talk during class I would have never gotten any constructive criticism.

Artifact # 4: Composition submitted at the end of the final implementation phase.

Assignment: How do you feel about writing after completing the special program?